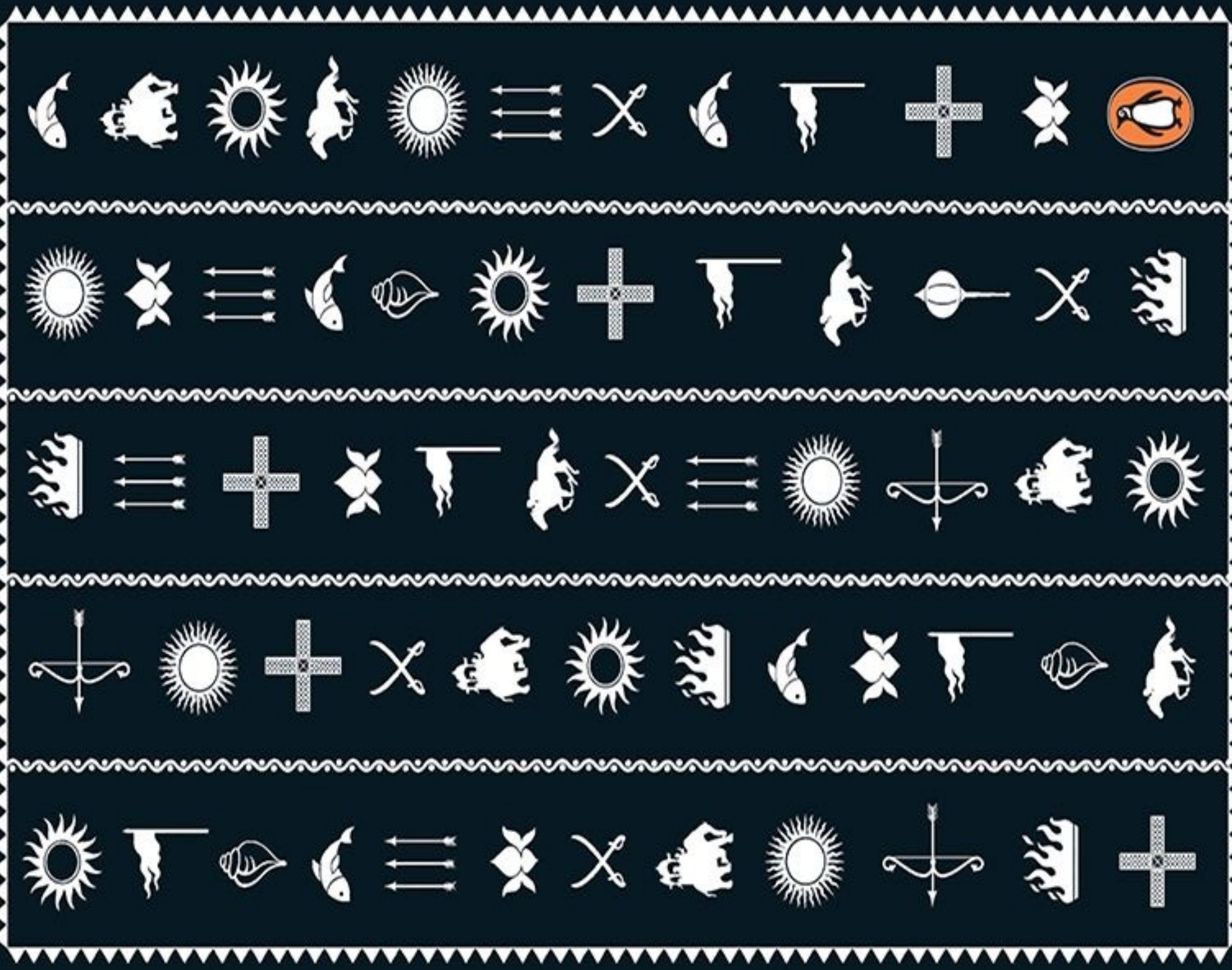
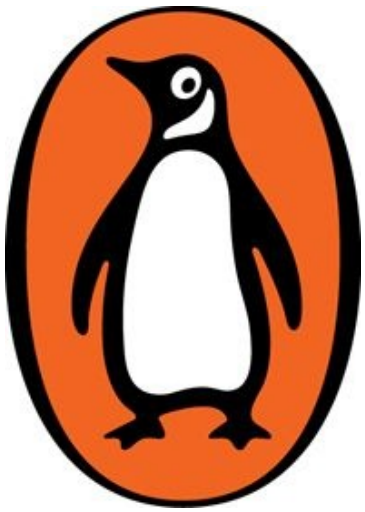




Translated by Bibek Debroy

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# THE MAHABHARATA

*Volume 10*
*(Sections 87 to 95)*



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*Acknowledgements*

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# About the Translator

Bibek Debroy is an economist and is Research Professor (Centre for Policy Research) and a columnist with *Economic Times*. He has worked in universities, research institutes, industry and for the government. He has published books, papers and popular articles in economics. But he has also published in Indology and translated (into English) the Vedas, the Puranas, the Upanishads and the Gita (Penguin India, 2005). His book *Sarama and Her Children: The Dog in Indian Myth* (Penguin India, 2008) splices his interest in Hinduism with his love for dogs.

## *Praise for Previous Volumes*

‘The modernization of language is visible, it’s easier on the mind, through expressions that are somewhat familiar. The detailing of the story is intact, the varying tempo maintained, with no deviations from the original. The short introduction reflects a brilliant mind. For those who passionately love the Mahabharata and want to explore it to its depths, Debroy’s translation offers great promise in the first volume.’

*—Hindustan Times*

‘[Debroy] has really carved out a niche for himself in crafting and presenting a translation of the Mahabharata … The book takes us on a great journey with admirable ease.’

*—The Indian Express*

‘The first thing that appeals to one is the simplicity with which Debroy has been able to express himself and infuse the right kind of meanings … Considering that Sanskrit is not the simplest of languages to translate a text from, Debroy exhibits his deep understanding and appreciation of the medium.’

*—The Hindu*

‘Overwhelmingly impressive … Bibek is a truly eclectic scholar.’

*—Business Line*

‘Debroy’s lucid and nuanced retelling of the original makes the masterpiece even more enjoyably accessible.’

*—Open*

‘The quality of translation is excellent. The lucid language makes it a pleasure to read the various stories, digressions and parables.’

*—The Tribune*

‘Extremely well-organized, and has a substantial and helpful Introduction, plot summaries and notes. The volume is a beautiful example of a well thought-out layout which makes for much easier reading.’

*—The Book Review*

‘The dispassionate vision [Debroy] brings to this endeavour will surely earn him merit in the three worlds.’

*—Mail Today*

‘This [second] volume, as voluminous as the first one, is expectedly as scholarly … Like the earlier volume, the whole book is an easy read.’

*—The Hindu*

‘Debroy’s is not the only English translation available in the market, but where he scores and others fail is that his is the closest rendering of the original text in modern English without unduly complicating the readers’ understanding of the epic.’

*—Business Standard*

‘The brilliance of Ved Vysya comes through [in Volume 3], ably translated by Bibek Debroy.’

*—Hindustan Times*

For my wife, Suparna Banerjee (Debroy), who has walked this path of dharma with me

*Ardha bhāryā manuṣyasya bhāryā śreṣṭhatamaḥ sakhā*
*Bhāryā mulam trivargasya bhāryā mitram mariṣyataḥ*

Mahabharata (1/68/40)

*Nāsti bhāryāsamo bandhurnāsti bhāryasamā gatiḥ*
*Nāsti bhāryasamo loke sahāyo dharmasādhanaḥ*

Mahabharata (12/142/10)

# Introduction

The Hindu tradition has an amazingly large corpus of religious texts, spanning Vedas, Vedanta (*brahmanas*,[1] *aranyakas*,[2] Upanishads,), Vedangas,[3] *smritis*, Puranas, dharmashastras and *itihasa*. For most of these texts, especially if one excludes classical Sanskrit literature, we don't quite know when they were composed and by whom, not that one is looking for single authors. Some of the minor Puranas (Upa Purana) are of later vintage. For instance, the Bhavishya Purana (which is often listed as a major Purana or Maha Purana) mentions Queen Victoria.

In the listing of the corpus above figures itihasa, translated into English as history. History doesn't entirely capture the nuance of itihasa, which is better translated as 'this is indeed what happened'. Itihasa isn't myth or fiction. It is a chronicle of what happened; it is fact. Or so runs the belief. And itihasa consists of India's two major epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The former is believed to have been composed as poetry and the latter as prose. This isn't quite correct. The Ramayana has segments in prose and the Mahabharata has segments in poetry. Itihasa doesn't quite belong to the category of religious texts in a way that the Vedas and Vedanta are religious. However, the dividing line between what is religious and what is not is fuzzy. After all, itihasa is also about attaining the objectives of *dharma*,[4] *artha*,[5] *kama*[6] and *moksha*[7] and the Mahabharata includes Hinduism's most important spiritual text—the Bhagavad Gita.

The epics are not part of the *shruti* tradition. That tradition is like revelation, without any composer. The epics are part of the *smriti* tradition. At the time they were composed, there was no question of texts being written down. They were recited, heard, memorized and passed down through the generations. But the smriti tradition had composers. The Ramayana was composed by Valmiki, regarded as the first poet or *kavi*. The word kavi has a secondary meaning as poet or rhymer. The primary meaning of kavi is someone who is wise. And in that sense, the composer of the Mahabharata was no less wise. This was Vedavyasa or Vyasadeva. He was so named because he classified (*vyasa*) the Vedas. Vedavyasa or Vyasadeva isn't a proper name. It is a title. Once in a while, in accordance with the needs of the era, the Vedas need to be classified. Each such person obtains the title and there have been twenty-eight Vyasadevas so far.

At one level, the question about who composed the Mahabharata is pointless. According to popular belief and according to what the Mahabharata itself states, it was composed by Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa (Vyasadeva). But the text was not composed and cast in stone at a single point in time. Multiple authors kept adding layers and embellishing it. Sections just kept getting added and it is no one's suggestion that Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa composed the text of the Mahabharata as it stands today.

Consequently, the Mahabharata is far more unstructured than the Ramayana. The major sections of the Ramayana are known as *kandas* and one meaning of the word kanda is the stem or trunk of a tree, suggesting solidity. The major sections of the Mahabharata are known as *parvas* and while one meaning of the word parva is limb or member or joint, in its nuance there is greater fluidity in the word parva than in kanda.

The Vyasadeva we are concerned with had a proper name of Krishna Dvaipayana. He was born on an island (*dvipa*). That explains the Dvaipayana part of the name. He was dark. That explains the Krishna part of the name. (It wasn't only the incarnation of Vishnu who had the name of Krishna.) Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa was also related to the protagonists of the Mahabharata story. To go back to the origins, the Ramayana is about the solar dynasty, while the Mahabharata is about the lunar dynasty. As is to be expected, the lunar dynasty begins with Soma (the moon) and goes down through Pururava (who married the famous apsara Urvashi), Nahusha and Yayati. Yayati became old, but wasn't ready to give up the pleasures of life. He asked his sons to temporarily loan him their youth. All but one refused. The ones who refused were cursed that they would never be kings, and this includes the Yadavas (descended from Yadu). The one who agreed was Puru and the lunar dynasty continued through him. Puru's son Duhshanta was made famous by Kalidasa in the Duhshanta–Shakuntala story and their son was Bharata, contributing to the name of Bharatavarsha. Bharata's grandson was Kuru. We often tend to think of the Kouravas as the evil protagonists in the Mahabharata story and the Pandavas as the good protagonists. Since Kuru was a common ancestor, the appellation Kourava applies equally to Yudhishthira and his brothers and Duryodhana and his brothers. Kuru's grandson was Shantanu. Through Satyavati, Shantanu fathered Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. However, the sage Parashara had already fathered Krishna Dvaipayana through Satyavati. And Shantanu had already fathered Bhishma through Ganga. Dhritarasthra and Pandu were fathered on Vichitravirya's wives by Krishna Dvaipayana.

The story of the epic is also about these antecedents and consequents. The core Mahabharata story is known to every Indian and is normally understood as a dispute between the Kouravas (descended from Dhritarashtra) and the Pandavas (descended from Pandu). However, this is a distilled version, which really begins with Shantanu. The non-distilled version takes us to the roots of the genealogical tree and at several points along this tree we confront a problem with impotence/sterility/death, resulting in offspring through a surrogate father. Such sons were accepted in that day and age. Nor was this a lunar dynasty problem alone. In the Ramayana, Dasharatha of the solar dynasty also had an infertility problem, corrected through a sacrifice. To return to the genealogical tree, the Pandavas won the Kurukshetra war. However, their five sons through Droupadi were killed. So was Bhima's son Ghatotkacha, fathered on Hidimba. As was Arjuna's son Abhimanyu, fathered on Subhadra. Abhimanyu's son Parikshit inherited the throne in Hastinapura, but was killed by a serpent. Parikshit's son was Janamejaya.

Krishna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa's powers of composition were remarkable. Having classified the Vedas, he composed the Mahabharata in 100,000 shlokas or couplets. Today's Mahabharata text doesn't have that many shlokas, even if the Hari Vamsha (regarded as the epilogue to the Mahabharata) is included. One reaches around 90,000 shlokas. That too, is a gigantic number. (The Mahabharata is almost four times the size of the Ramayana and is longer than any other epic

anywhere in the world.) For a count of 90,000 Sanskrit shlokas, we are talking about something in the neighbourhood of two million words. The text of the Mahabharata tells us that Krishna Dvaipayana finished this composition in three years. This doesn't necessarily mean that he composed 90,000 shlokas. The text also tells us that there are three versions to the Mahabharata. The original version was called Jaya and had 8,800 shlokas. This was expanded to 24,000 shlokas and called Bharata. Finally, it was expanded to 90,000 (or 100,000) shlokas and called Mahabharata.

Krishna Dvaipayana didn't rest even after that. He composed the eighteen Maha Puranas, adding another 400,000 shlokas. Having composed the Mahabharata, he taught it to his disciple Vaishampayana. When Parikshit was killed by a serpent, Janamejaya organized a snake-sacrifice to destroy the serpents. With all the sages assembled there, Vaishampayana turned up and the assembled sages wanted to know the story of the Mahabharata, as composed by Krishna Dvaipayana. Janamejaya also wanted to know why Parikshit had been killed by the serpent. That's the background against which the epic is recited. However, there is another round of recounting too. Much later, the sages assembled for a sacrifice in Naimisharanya and asked Lomaharshana (alternatively, Romaharshana) to recite what he had heard at Janamejaya's snake-sacrifice. Lomaharshana was a *suta*, the sutas being charioteers and bards or raconteurs. As the son of a suta, Lomaharshana is also referred to as Souti. But Souti or Lomaharshana aren't quite his proper names. His proper name is Ugrashrava. Souti refers to his birth. He owes the name Lomaharshana to the fact that the body-hair (*loma* or *roma*) stood up (*harshana*) on hearing his tales. Within the text therefore, two people are telling the tale. Sometimes it is Vaishampayana and sometimes it is Lomaharshana. Incidentally, the stories of the Puranas are recounted by Lomaharshana, without Vaishampayana intruding. Having composed the Puranas, Krishna Dvaipayana taught them to his disciple Lomaharshana. For what it is worth, there are scholars who have used statistical tests to try and identify the multiple authors of the Mahabharata.

As we are certain there were multiple authors rather than a single one, the question of when the Mahabharata was composed is somewhat pointless. It wasn't composed on a single date. It was composed over a span of more than 1000 years, perhaps between 800 BCE and 400 ACE. It is impossible to be more accurate than that. There is a difference between dating the composition and dating the incidents, such as the date of the Kurukshetra war. Dating the incidents is both subjective and controversial and irrelevant for the purposes of this translation. A timeline of 1000 years isn't short. But even then, the size of the corpus is nothing short of amazing.

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Familiarity with Sanskrit is dying out. The first decades of the twenty-first century are quite unlike the first decades of the twentieth. Lamentation over what is inevitable serves no purpose. English is increasingly becoming the global language, courtesy colonies (North America, South Asia, East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Africa) rather than the former colonizer. If familiarity with the corpus is not to die out, it needs to be accessible in English.

There are many different versions or recensions of the Mahabharata. However, between 1919 and 1966, the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI) in Pune produced what has come to be known as the critical edition. This is an authenticated text produced by a board of scholars and seeks to eliminate later interpolations, unifying the text across the various regional versions. This is the text

followed in this translation. One should also mention that the critical edition's text is not invariably smooth. Sometimes, the transition from one shloka to another is abrupt, because the intervening shloka has been weeded out. With the intervening shloka included, a non-critical version of the text sometimes makes better sense. On a few occasions, I have had the temerity to point this out in the notes which I have included in my translation.

It took a long time for this critical edition to be put together. The exercise began in 1919. Without the Hari Vamsha, the complete critical edition became available in 1966. And with the Hari Vamsha, the complete critical edition became available in 1970. Before this, there were regional variations in the text and the main versions were available from Bengal, Bombay and the south. However, now, one should stick to the critical edition, though there are occasional instances where there are reasons for dissatisfaction with what the scholars of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute have accomplished. But in all fairness, there are two published versions of the critical edition. The first one has the bare bones of the critical edition's text. The second has all the regional versions collated, with copious notes. The former is for the ordinary reader, assuming he/she knows Sanskrit. And the latter is for the scholar. Consequently, some popular beliefs no longer find a place in the critical edition's text. For example, it is believed that Vedavyasa dictated the text to Ganesha, who wrote it down. But Ganesha had a condition before accepting. Vedavyasa would have to dictate continuously, without stopping. Vedavyasa threw in a counter-condition. Ganesha would have to understand each couplet before he wrote it down. To flummox Ganesha and give himself time to think, Vedavyasa threw in some cryptic verses. This attractive anecdote has been excised from the critical edition's text. Barring material that is completely religious (specific hymns or the Bhagavad Gita), the Sanskrit text is reasonably easy to understand. Oddly, I have had the most difficulty with things that Vidura has sometimes said. Arya has today come to connote ethnicity. Originally, it meant language. That is, those who spoke Sanskrit were Aryas. Those who did not speak Sanskrit were mlecchas. Vidura is supposed to have been skilled in the mlechha language. Is that the reason why some of Vidura's statements seem obscure? In similar vein, in popular renderings, when Droupadi is being disrobed, she prays to Krishna. Krishna provides the never-ending stream of garments that stump Duhshasana. The critical edition has excised the prayer to Krishna. The never-ending stream of garments is given as an extraordinary event. However, there is no intervention from Krishna.

How is the Mahabharata classified? The core component is the couplet or shloka. Several such shlokas form a chapter or *adhyaya*. Several adhyayas form a parva. Most people probably think that the Mahabharata has eighteen parvas. This is true, but there is another 100-parva classification that is indicated in the text itself. That is, the adhyayas can be classified either according to eighteen parvas or according to 100 parvas. The table (given on pp. xxiii-xxvi ), based on the critical edition, should make this clear. As the table shows, the present critical edition only has ninety-eight parvas of the 100-parva classification, though the 100 parvas are named in the text.

| *Eighteen-parva classification* | *100-parva classification* | *Number of adhyayas* | *Number of shlokas* |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Adi | 1) Anukramanika[8] | 1 | 210 |
| | 2) Parvasamgraha | 1 | 243 |
| | 3) Poushya | 1 | 195 |
| | 4) Pouloma | 9 | 153 |
| | 5) Astika | 41 | 1025 |
| | 6) Adi-vamshavatarana | 5 | 257 |
| | 7) Sambhava | 65 | 2394 |
| | 8) Jatugriha-daha | 15 | 373 |
| | 9) Hidimba-vadha | 6 | 169 |
| | 10) Baka-vadha | 8 | 206 |
| | 11) Chaitraratha | 21 | 557 |
| | 12) Droupadi-svayamvara | 12 | 263 |
| | 13) Vaivahika | 6 | 155 |
| | 14) Viduragamana | 7 | 174 |
| | 15) Rajya-labha | 1 | 50 |
| | 16) Arjuna-vanavasa | 11 | 298 |
| | 17) Subhadra-harana | 2 | 57 |
| | 18) Harana harika | 1 | 82 |
| | 19) Khandava-daha | 12 | 344 |
| | | Total = 225 | Total = 7205 |
| (2) Sabha | 20) Sabha | 11 | 429 |
| | 21) Mantra | 6 | 222 |
| | 22) Jarasandha-vadha | 5 | 195 |
| | 23) Digvijaya | 7 | 191 |
| | 24) Rajasuya | 3 | 97 |
| | 25) Arghabhiharana | 4 | 99 |
| | 26) Shishupala-vadha | 6 | 191 |
| | 27) Dyuta | 23 | 734 |
| | 28) Anudyuta | 7 | 232 |
| | | Total = 72 | Total = 2387 |
| (3) Aranyaka | 29) Aranyaka | 11 | 327 |
| | 30) Kirmira-vadha | 1 | 75 |
| | 31) Kairata | 30 | 1158 |
| | 32) Indralokabhigamana | 37 | 1175 |
| | 33) Tirtha-yatra | 74 | 2293 |
| | 34) Jatasura-vadha | 1 | 61 |
| | 35) Yaksha-yuddha | 18 | 727 |
| | 36) Ajagara | 6 | 201 |
| | 37) Markandeya-samasya | 43 | 1694 |
| | 38) Droupadi-Satyabhama-sambada | 3 | 88 |
| | 39) Ghosha-yatra | 19 | 519 |
| | 40) Mriga-svapna-bhaya | 1 | 16 |
| | 41) Vrihi-drounika | 3 | 117 |
| | 42) Droupadi-harana | 36 | 1247 |
| | 43) Kundala-harana | 11 | 294 |
| | 44) Araneya | 5 | 191 |
| | | Total = 299 | Total = 10239 |
| (4) Virata | 45) Vairata | 12 | 282 |
| | 46) Kichaka-vadha | 11 | 353 |
| | 47) Go-grahana | 39 | 1009 |
| | 48) Vaivahika | 5 | 179 |
| | | Total = 67 | Total = 1736 |

| *Eighteen-parva classification* | *100-parva classification* | *Number of adhyayas* | *Number of shlokas* |
|---|---|---|---|
| (5) Udyoga | 49) Udyoga | 21 | 575 |
| | 50) Sanjaya-yana | 11 | 311 |
| | 51) Prajagara | 9 | 541 |
| | 52) Sanatsujata | 4 | 121 |
| | 53) Yana-sandhi | 24 | 726 |
| | 54) Bhagavat-yana | 65 | 2055 |
| | 55) Karna-upanivada | 14 | 351 |
| | 56) Abhiniryana | 4 | 169 |
| | 57) Bhishma-abhishechana | 4 | 122 |
| | 58) Uluka-yana | 4 | 101 |
| | 59) Ratha-atiratha-samkhya | 9 | 231 |
| | 60) Amba-upakhyana | 28 | 755 |
| | | Total = 197 | Total = 6001 |
| (6) Bhishma | 61) Jambukhanda-vinirmana | 11 | 378 |
| | 62) Bhumi | 2 | 87 |
| | 63) Bhagavad Gita | 27 | 994 |
| | 64) Bhishma vadha | 77 | 3947 |
| | | Total = 117 | Total = 5381 |
| (7) Drona | 65) Dronabhisheka | 15 | 634 |
| | 66) Samshaptaka-vadha | 16 | 717 |
| | 67) Abhimanyu-vadha | 20 | 643 |
| | 68) Pratijna | 9 | 365 |
| | 69) Jayadratha-vadha | 61 | 2914 |
| | 70) Ghatotkacha-vadha | 33 | 1642 |
| | 71) Drona-vadha | 11 | 692 |
| | 72) Narayanastra-moksha | 8 | 538 |
| | | Total = 173 | Total = 8069 |
| (8) Karna | 73) Karna-vadha | 69 | 3870 |
| (9) Shalya | 74) Shalya-vadha | 16 | 844 |
| | 75) Hrada pravesha | 12 | 664 |
| | 76) Tirtha yatra | 25 | 1261 |
| | 77) Gada yuddha | 11 | 546 |
| | | Total = 64 | Total = 3315 |
| (10) Souptika | 78) Souptika | 9 | 515 |
| | 79) Aishika | 9 | 257 |
| | | Total = 18 | Total = 771 |

| *Eighteen-parva classification* | *100-parva classification* | *Number of adhyayas* | *Number of shlokas* |
|---|---|---|---|
| (11) Stri | 80) Vishoka | 8 | 194 |
| | 81) Stri | 17 | 468 |
| | 82) Shraddha | 1 | 44 |
| | 83) Jala-pradanika | 1 | 24 |
| | | Total = 27 | Total = 713 |
| (12) Shanti | 84) Raja-dharma | 128 | 4509 |
| | 85) Apad-dharma | 39 | 1560 |
| | 86) Moksha Dharma | 186 | 6935 |
| | | Total = 353 | Total = 13006 |
| (13) Anushasana | 87) Dana Dharma | 152 | 6450 |
| | 88) Bhishma-svargarohana | 2 | 84 |
| | | Total = 154 | Total = 6493 |
| (14) Ashva-medhika | 89) Ashvamedhika | 96 | 2743 |
| (15) Ashra-mavasika | 90) Ashrama-vasa | 35 | 737 |
| | 91) Putra Darshana | 9 | 234 |
| | 92) Naradagamana | 3 | 91 |
| | | Total = 47 | Total = 1061 |
| (16) Mousala | 93) Mousala | 9 | 273 |
| (17) Mahapra-sthanika | 94) Maha-Prasthanika | 3 | 106 |
| (18) Svargarohana | 95) Svargarohana | 5 | 194 |
| Hari Vamsha | 96) Hari-vamsha | 45 | 2442 |
| | 97) Vishnu | 68 | 3426 |
| | 98) Bhavishya | 5 | 205 |
| | | Total = 118 | Total = 6073 |
| Grand total = 19 | Grand total = 98 (95 + 3) | Grand total = 2113 (1995 + 118) | Grand total = 79,860 (73787 + 6073) |

Thus, interpreted in terms of BORI's critical edition, the Mahabharata no longer possesses the 100,000 shlokas it is supposed to have. The figure is a little short of 75,000 (73,787 to be precise). Should the Hari Vamsha be included in a translation of the Mahabharata? It doesn't quite belong. Yet, it is described as a *khila* or supplement to the Mahabharata and BORI includes it as part of the critical edition, though in a separate volume. Hence, I have included the Hari Vamsha in this translation as well. With the Hari Vamsha, the number of shlokas increases to a shade less than 80,000 (79,860 to be precise). However, in some of the regional versions the text of the Mahabharata proper is closer to 85,000 shlokas and with the Hari Vamsha included, one approaches 95,000, though one doesn't quite touch 100,000.

Why should there be another translation of the Mahabharata? Surely, it must have been translated innumerable times. Contrary to popular impression, unabridged translations of the Mahabharata in English are extremely rare. One should not confuse abridged translations with unabridged versions. There are only five unabridged translations—by Kisori Mohan Ganguly (1883–96), by Manmatha Nath Dutt (1895–1905), by the University of Chicago and J.A.B. van Buitenen (1973 onwards), by P. Lal and Writers Workshop (2005 onwards) and the Clay Sanskrit Library edition (2005 onwards). Of these, P. Lal is more a poetic trans-creation than a translation. The Clay Sanskrit Library edition is not based on the critical edition, deliberately so. In the days of Ganguly and Dutt, the critical edition

didn't exist. The language in these two versions is now archaic and there are some shlokas that these two translators decided not to include, believing them to be untranslatable in that day and age. Almost three decades later, the Chicago version is still not complete, and the Clay edition, not being translated in sequence, is still in progress. However, the primary reason for venturing into yet another translation is not just the vacuum that exists, but also reason for dissatisfaction with other attempts. Stated more explicitly, this translation, I believe, is better and more authentic—but I leave it to the reader to be the final judge. (While translating 80,000 shlokas is a hazardous venture, since Ganguly, Dutt and Lal are Bengalis, surely a fourth Bengali must also be pre-eminently qualified to embark on this venture!)

A few comments on the translation are now in order. First, there is the vexed question of diacritical marks—should they be used or not? Diacritical marks make the translation and pronunciation more accurate, but often put readers off. Sacrificing academic purity, there is thus a conscious decision to avoid diacritical marks. Second, since diacritical marks are not being used, Sanskrit words and proper names are written in what seems to be phonetically natural and the closest—such as, Droupadi rather than Draupadi. There are rare instances where avoidance of diacritical marks can cause minor confusion, for example, between Krishna (Krishnaa) as in Droupadi[9] and Krishna as in Vaasudeva. However, such instances are extremely rare and the context should make these differences, which are mostly of the gender kind, clear. Third, there are some words that simply cannot be translated. One such word is dharma. More accurately, such words are translated the first time they occur. But on subsequent occasions, they are romanized in the text. Fourth, the translation sticks to the Sanskrit text as closely as possible. If the text uses the word Kounteya, this translation will leave it as Kounteya or Kunti's son and not attempt to replace it with Arjuna. Instead, there will be a note explaining that in that specific context Kounteya refers to Arjuna or, somewhat more rarely, Yudhishthira or Bhima. This is also the case in the structure of the English sentences. To cite an instance, if a metaphor occurs towards the beginning of the Sanskrit shloka, the English sentence attempts to retain it at the beginning too. Had this not been done, the English might have read smoother. But to the extent there is a trade-off, one has stuck to what is most accurate, rather than attempting to make the English smooth and less stilted.

As the table shows, the parvas (in the eighteen-parva classification) vary widely in length. The gigantic Aranyaka or Shanti Parva can be contrasted with the slim Mousala Parva. Breaking up the translation into separate volumes based on this eighteen-parva classification therefore doesn't work. The volumes will not be remotely similar in size. Most translators seem to keep a target of ten to twelve volumes when translating all the parvas. Assuming ten volumes, 10 per cent means roughly 200 chapters and 7000 shlokas. This works rather well for Adi Parva, but collapses thereafter. Most translators therefore have Adi Parva as the first volume and then handle the heterogeneity across the eighteen parvas in subsequent volumes. This translation approaches the break-up of volumes somewhat differently, in the sense that roughly 10 per cent of the text is covered in each volume. The complete text, as explained earlier, is roughly 200 chapters and 7,000 shlokas per volume. For example, then, this first volume has been cut off at 199 chapters and a little less than 6,500 shlokas. It includes 90 per cent of Adi Parva, but not all of it and covers the first fifteen parvas of the 100-(or 98-) parva classification.

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The Mahabharata is one of the greatest stories ever told. It has plots and subplots and meanderings and digressions. It is much more than the core story of a war between the Kouravas and the Pandavas, which everyone is familiar with, the culmination of which was the battle in Kurukshetra. In the Adi Parva, there is a lot more which happens before the Kouravas and the Pandavas actually arrive on the scene. In the 100-parva classification, the Kouravas and the Pandavas don't arrive on the scene until Section 6.

From the Vedas and Vedanta literature, we know that Janamejaya and Parikshit were historical persons. From Patanjali's grammar and other contemporary texts, we know that the Mahabharata text existed by around 400 BCE. This need not of course be the final text of Mahabharata, but could have been the original text of Jaya. The Hindu eras or *yugas* are four in number—Satya (or Krita) Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga. This cycle then repeats itself, with another Satya Yuga following Kali Yuga. The events of the Ramayana occurred in Treta Yuga. The events of the Mahabharata occurred in Dvapara Yuga. This is in line with Rama being Vishnu's seventh incarnation and Krishna being the eighth. (The ninth is Buddha and the tenth is Kalki.) We are now in Kali Yuga. Kali Yuga didn't begin with the Kurukshetra war. It began with Krishna's death, an event that occurred thirty-six years after the Kurukshetra war. Astronomical data do exist in the epic. These can be used to date the Kurukshetra war, or the advent of Kali Yuga. However, if the text was composed at different points in time, with additions and interpolations, internal consistency in astronomical data is unlikely. In popular belief, following two alternative astronomers, the Kurukshetra war has been dated to 3102 BCE (following Aryabhatta) and 2449 BCE (following Varahamihira). This doesn't mesh with the timelines of Indian history. Mahapadma Nanda ascended the throne in 382 BCE, a historical fact on which there is no dispute. The Puranas have genealogical lists. Some of these state that 1050 years elapsed between Parikshit's birth and Mahapadma Nanda's ascension. Others state that 1015 years elapsed. (When numerals are written in words, it is easy to confuse 15 with 50.) This takes Parikshit's birth and the Kurukshetra war to around 1400 BCE. This is probably the best we can do, since we also know that the Kuru kingdom flourished between 1200 BCE and 800 BCE. To keep the record straight, archaeological material has been used to bring forward the date of the Kurukshetra war to around 900 BCE, the period of the Iron Age.

As was mentioned, in popular belief, the incidents of the Ramayana took place before the incidents of the Mahabharata. The Ramayana story also figures in the Mahabharata. However, there is no reference to any significant Mahabharata detail in the Ramayana. Nevertheless, from reading the text, one gets the sense that the Mahabharata represents a more primitive society than the Ramayana. The fighting in the Ramayana is more genteel and civilized. You don't have people hurling rocks and stones at each other, or fighting with trees and bare arms. Nor do people rip apart the enemy's chest and drink blood. The geographical knowledge in the Mahabharata is also more limited than in the Ramayana, both towards the east and towards the south. In popular belief, the Kurukshetra war occurred as a result of a dispute over land and the kingdom. That is true, in so far as the present text is concerned. However, another fight over cattle took place in the Virata Parva and the Pandavas were victorious in that too. This is not the place to expand on the argument. But it is possible to construct a

plausible hypothesis that this was the core dispute. Everything else was added as later embellishments. The property dispute was over cattle and not land. In human evolution, cattle represents a more primitive form of property than land. In that stage, humankind is still partly nomadic and not completely settled. If this hypothesis is true, the Mahabharata again represents an earlier period compared to the Ramayana. This leads to the following kind of proposition. In its final form, the Mahabharata was indeed composed after the Ramayana. But the earliest version of the Mahabharata was composed before the earliest version of the Ramayana. And the events of the Mahabharata occurred before the events of the Ramayana, despite popular belief. The proposition about the feud ending with Virata Parva illustrates the endless speculation that is possible with the Mahabharata material. Did Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva ever exist? Nakula and Sahadeva have limited roles to play in the story. Arjuna's induction could have been an attempt to assert Indra's supremacy. Arjuna represents such an integral strand in the story (and of the Bhagavad Gita), that such a suggestion is likely to be dismissed out of hand. But consider the following. Droupadi loved Arjuna a little bit more than the others. That's the reason she was denied admission to heaven. Throughout the text, there are innumerable instances where Droupadi faces difficulties. Does she ever summon Arjuna for help on such occasions? No, she does not. She summons Bhima. Therefore, did Arjuna exist at all? Or were there simply two original Pandava brothers—one powerful and strong, and the other weak and useless in physical terms. Incidentally, the eighteen-parva classification is clearly something that was done much later. The 100-parva classification seems to be older.

The Mahabharata is much more real than the Ramayana. And, therefore, much more fascinating. Every conceivable human emotion figures in it, which is the reason why it is possible to identify with it even today. The text itself states that what is not found in the Mahabharata, will not be found anywhere else. Unlike the Ramayana, India is littered with real places that have identifications with the Mahabharata. (Ayodhya or Lanka or Chitrakuta are identifications that are less certain.) Kurukshetra, Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Karnal, Mathura, Dvaraka, Gurgaon, Girivraja are real places: the list is endless. In all kinds of unlikely places, one comes across temples erected by the Pandavas when they were exiled to the forest. In some of these places, archaeological excavations have substantiated the stories. The war for regional supremacy in the Ganga–Yamuna belt is also a plausible one. The Vrishnis and the Shurasenas (the Yadavas) are isolated, they have no clear alliance (before the Pandavas) with the powerful Kurus. There is the powerful Magadha kingdom under Jarasandha and Jarasandha had made life difficult for the Yadavas. He chased them away from Mathura to Dvaraka. Shishupala of the Chedi kingdom doesn't like Krishna and the Yadavas either. Through Kunti, Krishna has a matrimonial alliance with the Pandavas. Through Subhadra, the Yadavas have another matrimonial alliance with the Pandavas. Through another matrimonial alliance, the Pandavas obtain Drupada of Panchala as an ally. In the course of the royal sacrifice, Shishupala and Jarasandha are eliminated. Finally, there is yet another matrimonial alliance with Virata of the Matsya kingdom, through Abhimanyu. When the two sides face each other on the field of battle, they are more than evenly matched. Other than the Yadavas, the Pandavas have Panchala, Kashi, Magadha, Matsya and Chedi on their side. The Kouravas have Pragjyotisha, Anga, Kekaya, Sindhu, Avanti, Gandhara, Shalva, Bahlika and Kamboja as allies. At the end of the war, all these kings are slain and the entire

geographical expanse comes under the control of the Pandavas and the Yadavas. Only Kripacharya, Ashvatthama and Kritavarma survive on the Kourava side.

Reading the Mahabharata, one forms the impression that it is based on some real incidents. That does not mean that a war on the scale that is described took place. Or that miraculous weapons and chariots were the norm. But there is such a lot of trivia, unconnected with the main story, that their inclusion seems to serve no purpose unless they were true depictions. For instance, what does the physical description of Kripa's sister and Drona's wife, Kripi, have to do with the main story? It is also more real than the Ramayana because nothing, especially the treatment of human emotions and behaviour, exists in black and white. Everything is in shades of grey. The Uttara Kanda of the Ramayana is believed to have been a later interpolation. If one excludes the Uttara Kanda, we generally know what is good. We know who is good. We know what is bad. We know who is bad. The Ramayana is like a clichéd Bollywood film. This is never the case with the Mahabharata. However, a qualification is necessary. Most of us are aware of the Mahabharata story because we have read some version or the other, typically an abridged one. Every abridged version simplifies and condenses, distills out the core story. And in doing that, it tends to paint things in black and white, fitting everything into the mould of good and bad. The Kouravas are bad. The Pandavas are good. And good eventually triumphs. The unabridged Mahabharata is anything but that. It is much more nuanced. Duryodhana isn't invariably bad. He is referred to as Suyodhana as well, and not just by his father. History is always written from the point of view of the victors. While the Mahabharata is generally laudatory towards the Pandavas, there are several places where the text has a pro-Kourava stance. There are several places where the text has an anti-Krishna stance. That's yet another reason why one should read an unabridged version, so as not to miss out on these nuances. Take the simple point about inheritance of the kingdom. Dhritarashtra was blind. Consequently, the king was Pandu. On Pandu's death, who should inherit the kingdom? Yudhishthira was the eldest among the brothers. (Actually, Karna was, though it didn't become known until later.) We thus tend to assume that the kingdom was Yudhishthira's by right, because he was the eldest. (The division of the kingdom into two, Hastinapura and Indraprastha, is a separate matter.) But such primogeniture was not universally clear. A case can also be established for Duryodhana, because he was Dhritarashtra's son. If primogeniture was the rule, the eldest son of the Pandavas was Ghatotkacha, not Abhimanyu. Before both were killed, Ghatotkacha should have had a claim to the throne. However, there is no such suggestion anywhere. The argument that Ghatotkacha was the son of a rakshasa or demon will not wash. He never exhibited any demonic qualities and was a dutiful and loving son. Karna saved up a weapon for Arjuna and this was eventually used to kill Ghatotkacha. At that time, we have the unseemly sight of Krishna dancing around in glee at Ghatotkacha being killed.

In the Mahabharata, because it is nuanced, we never quite know what is good and what is bad, who is good and who is bad. Yes, there are degrees along a continuum. But there are no watertight and neat compartments. The four objectives of human existence are dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Etymologically, dharma is that which upholds. If one goes by the Bhagavad Gita, pursuit of these four are also transient diversions. Because the fundamental objective is to transcend these four, even moksha. Within these four, the Mahabharata is about a conflict of dharma. Dharma has been reduced to *varnashrama* dharma, according to the four classes (*varnas*) and four stages of life (*ashramas*).

However, these are collective interpretations of dharma, in the sense that a Kshatriya in the *garhasthya* (householder) stage has certain duties. Dharma in the Mahabharata is individual too. Given an identical situation, a Kshatriya in the garhasthya stage might adopt a course of action that is different from that adopted by another Kshatriya in the garhasthya stage, and who is to judge what is wrong and what is right? Bhishma adopted a life of celibacy. So did Arjuna, for a limited period. In that stage of celibacy, both were approached by women who had fallen in love with them. And if those desires were not satisfied, the respective women would face difficulties, even death. Bhishma spurned the advance, but Arjuna accepted it. The conflict over dharma is not only the law versus morality conflict made famous by Krishna and Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. It pervades the Mahabharata, in terms of a conflict over two different notions of dharma. Having collectively married Droupadi, the Pandavas have agreed that when one of them is closeted with Droupadi, the other four will not intrude. And if there is such an instance of intrusion, they will go into self-exile. Along comes a Brahmana whose cattle have been stolen by thieves. Arjuna's weapons are in the room where Droupadi and Yudhishthira are. Which is the higher dharma? Providing succour to the Brahmana or adhering to the oath? Throughout the Mahabharata, we have such conflicts, with no clear normative indications of what is wrong and what is right, because there are indeed no absolute answers. Depending on one's decisions, one faces the consequences and this brings in the unsolvable riddle of the tension between free will and determinism, the so-called karma concept. The boundaries of philosophy and religion blur.

These conflicts over dharma are easy to identify with. It is easy to empathize with the protagonists, because we face such conflicts every day. That is precisely the reason why the Mahabharata is read even today. And the reason one says every conceivable human emotion figures in the story. Everyone familiar with the Mahabharata has thought about the decisions taken and about the characters. Why was life so unfair to Karna? Why was Krishna partial to the Pandavas? Why didn't he prevent the war? Why was Abhimanyu killed so unfairly? Why did the spirited and dark Droupadi, so unlike the Sita of the Ramayana, have to be humiliated publicly?

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It is impossible to pinpoint when and how my interest in the Mahabharata started. As a mere toddler, my maternal grandmother used to tell me stories from *Chandi*, part of the Markandeya Purana. I still vividly recollect pictures from her copy of *Chandi*: Kali licking the demon Raktavija's blood. Much later, in my early teens, at school in Ramakrishna Mission, Narendrapur, I first read the Bhagavad Gita, without understanding much of what I read. The alliteration and poetry in the first chapter was attractive enough for me to learn it by heart. Perhaps the seeds were sown there. In my late teens, I stumbled upon Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Krishna Charitra*, written in 1886. Bankimchandra was not only a famous novelist, he was a brilliant essayist. For a long time, *Krishna Charitra* was not available other than in Bengali. It has now been translated into English, but deserves better dissemination. A little later, when in college, I encountered Buddhadeb Bose's *Mahabharater Katha*. That was another brilliant collection of essays, first serialized in a magazine and then published as a book in 1974. This too was originally in Bengali, but is now available in English. Unlike my sons, my first exposure to the Mahabharata story came not through television serials but comic books.

Upendrakishore Raychowdhury's Mahabharata (and Ramayana) for children was staple diet, later supplanted by Rajshekhar Basu's abridged versions of both epics, written for adults. Both were in Bengali. In English, there was Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's abridged translation, still a perennial favourite. Later, Chakravarthi Narasimhan's selective unabridged translation gave a flavour of what the Mahabharata actually contained. In Bengal, the Kashiram Das version of the Mahabharata, written in the seventeenth century, was quite popular. I never found this appealing. But in the late 1970s, I stumbled upon a treasure. Kolkata's famous College Street was a storehouse of old and second-hand books in those days. You never knew what you would discover when browsing. In the nineteenth century, an unabridged translation of the Mahabharata had been done in Bengali under the editorship of Kaliprasanna Singha (1840–70). I picked this up for the princely sum of Rs 5. The year may have been 1979, but Rs 5 was still amazing. This was my first complete reading of the unabridged version of the Mahabharata. This particular copy probably had antiquarian value. The pages would crumble in my hands and I soon replaced my treasured possession with a republished reprint. Not longer after, I acquired the Aryashastra version of the Mahabharata, with both the Sanskrit and the Bengali together. In the early 1980s, I was also exposed to three Marathi writers writing on the Mahabharata. There was Iravati Karve's *Yuganta*. This was available in both English and in Marathi. I read the English one first, followed by the Marathi. The English version isn't an exact translation of the Marathi and the Marathi version is far superior. Then there was Durga Bhagwat's *Vyas Parva*. This was in Marathi and I am not aware of an English translation. Finally, there was Shivaji Sawant's *Mritunjaya*, a kind of autobiography for Karna. This was available both in English and in Marathi.

In the early 1980s, quite by chance, I encountered two shlokas, one from Valmiki's Ramayana, the other from Kalidasa's *Meghadutam*. These were two poets separated by anything between 500 to 1,000 years, the exact period being an uncertain one. The shloka in *Meghadutam* is right towards the beginning, the second shloka to be precise. It is the first day in the month of Ashada. The yaksha has been cursed and has been separated from his beloved. The mountains are covered with clouds. These clouds are like elephants, bent down as if in play. The shloka in the Valmiki Ramayana occurs in Sundara Kanda. Rama now knows that Sita is in Lanka. But the monsoon stands in the way of the invasion. The clouds are streaked with flags of lightning and garlanded with geese. They are like mountain peaks and are thundering, like elephants fighting. At that time, I did not know that elephants were a standard metaphor for clouds in Sanskrit literature. I found it amazing that two different poets separated by time had thought of elephants. And because the yaksha was pining for his beloved, the elephants were playing. But because Rama was impatient to fight, the elephants were fighting. I resolved that I must read all this in the original. It was a resolution I have never regretted. I think that anyone who has not read *Meghadutam* in Sanskrit has missed out on a thing of beauty that will continue to be a joy for generations to come.

In the early 1980s, Professor Ashok Rudra was a professor of economics in Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. I used to teach in Presidency College, Kolkata, and we sometimes met. Professor Rudra was a left-wing economist and didn't think much of my economics. I dare say the feeling was reciprocated. By tacit agreement, we never discussed economics. Instead, we discussed Indological subjects. At that point, Professor Rudra used to write essays on such subjects in Bengali. I casually remarked, 'I want to do a statistical test on the frequency with which the five Pandavas used various

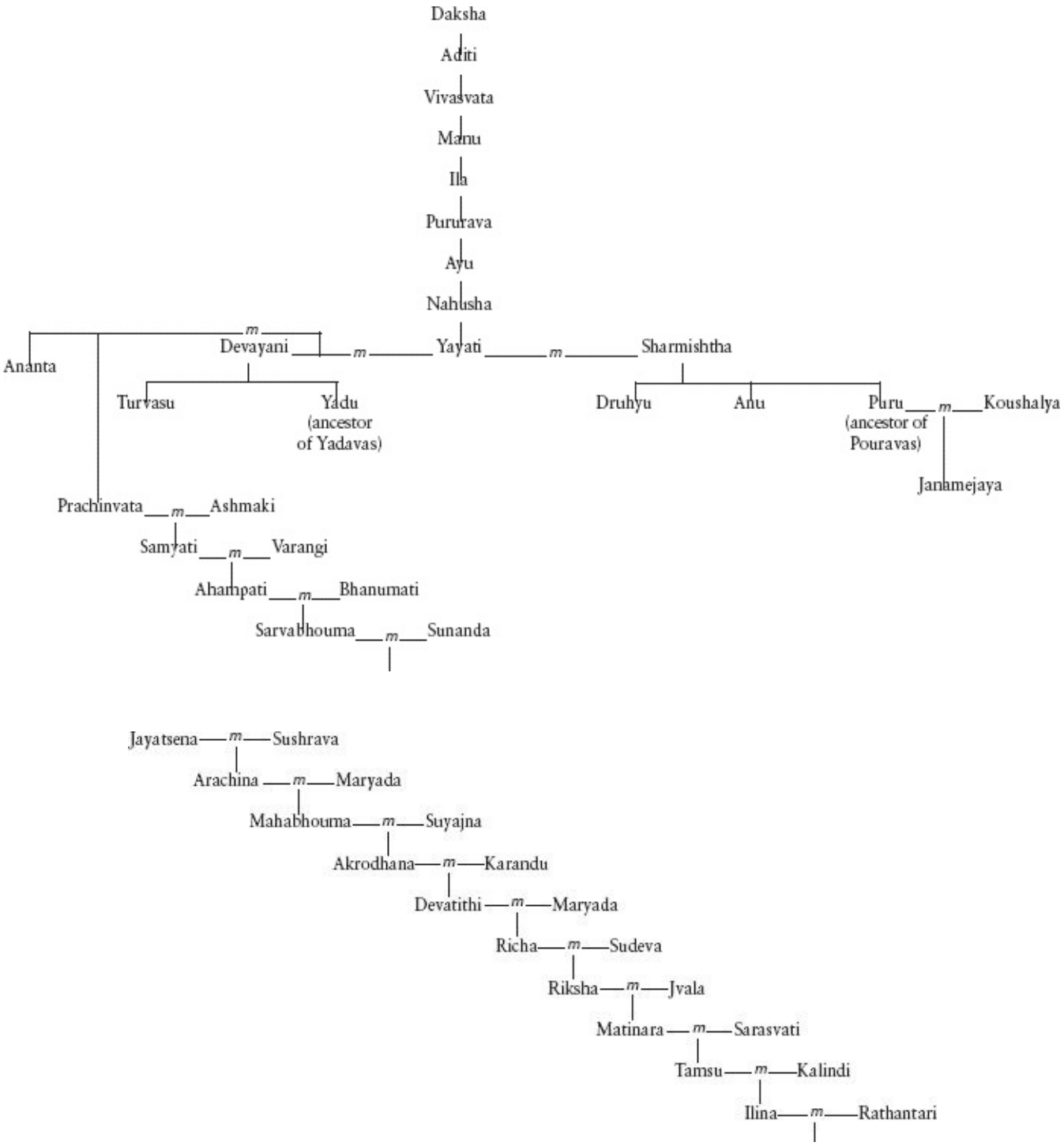
weapons in the Kurukshetra war.' Most sensible men would have dismissed the thought as crazy. But Professor Rudra wasn't sensible by usual norms of behaviour and he was also a trained statistician. He encouraged me to do the paper, written and published in Bengali, using the Aryashastra edition. Several similar papers followed, written in Bengali. In 1983, I moved to Pune, to the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, a stone's throw away from BORI. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (ABORI)* is one of the most respected journals in Indology. Professor G.B. Palsule was then the editor of *ABORI* and later went on to become Director of BORI. I translated one of the Bengali essays into English and went and met Professor Palsule, hoping to get it published in *ABORI*. To Professor Palsule's eternal credit, he didn't throw the dilettante out. Instead, he said he would get the paper refereed. The referee's substantive criticism was that the paper should have been based on the critical edition, which is how I came to know about it. Eventually, this paper (and a few more) were published in *ABORI*. In 1989, these became a book titled *Essays on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata*, published when the Mahabharata frenzy had reached a peak on television. The book got excellent reviews, but hardly sold. It is now out of print. As an aside, the book was jointly dedicated to Professor Rudra and Professor Palsule, a famous economist and a famous Indologist respectively. Both were flattered. However, when I gave him a copy, Professor Rudra said, 'Thank you very much. But who is Professor Palsule?' And Professor Palsule remarked, 'Thank you very much. But who is Professor Rudra?'

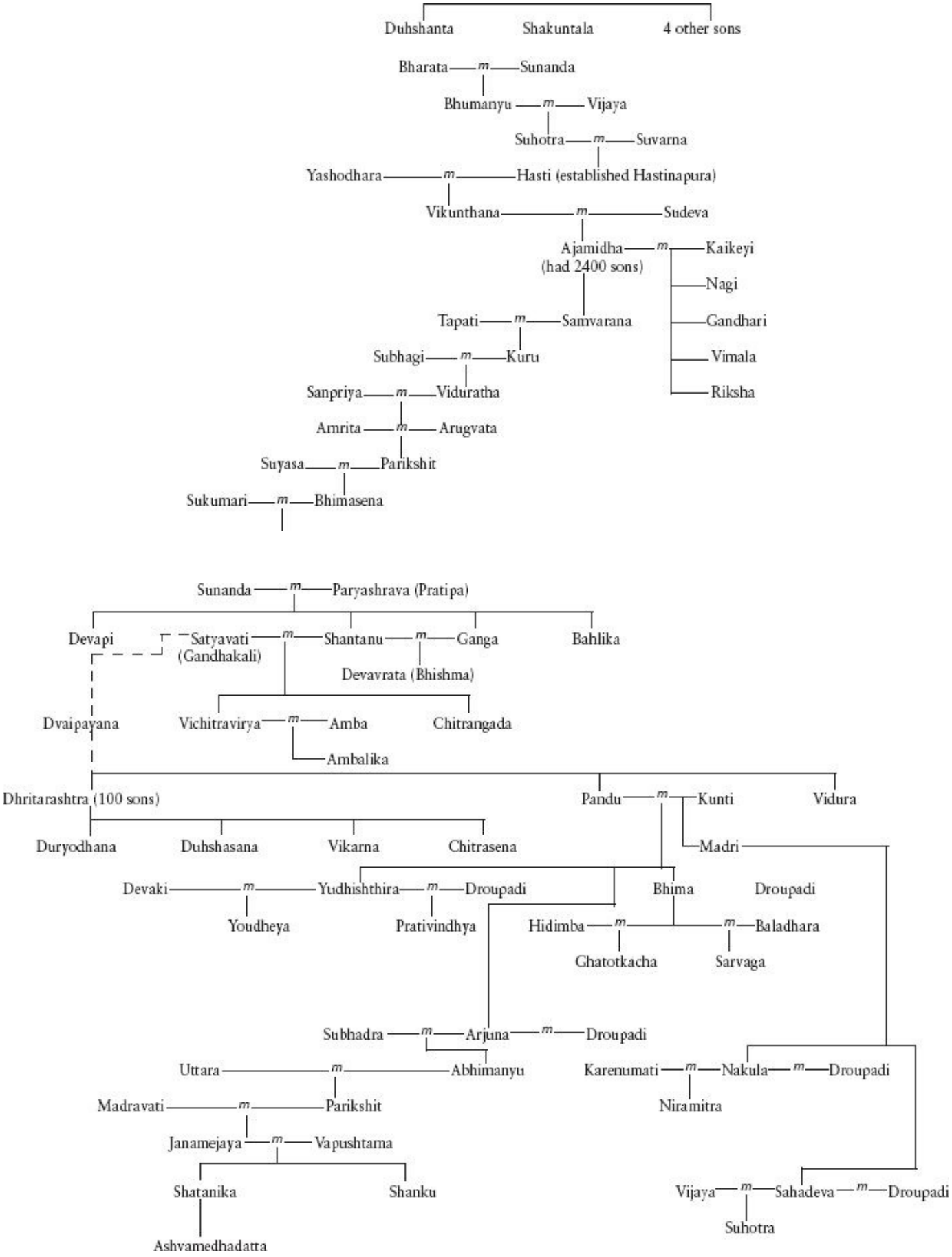
While the research interest in the Mahabharata remained, I got sidetracked into translating. Through the 1990s, there were abridged translations of the Maha Puranas, the Vedas and the eleven major Upanishads. I found that I enjoyed translating from the Sanskrit to English and since these volumes were well received, perhaps I did do a good job. With Penguin as publisher, I did a translation of the Bhagavad Gita, something I had always wanted to do. *Sarama and Her Children*, a book on attitudes towards dogs in India, also with Penguin, followed. I kept thinking about doing an unabridged translation of the Mahabharata and waited to muster up the courage. That courage now exists, though the task is daunting. With something like two million words and ten volumes expected, the exercise seems open-ended. But why translate the Mahabharata? In 1924, George Mallory, with his fellow climber Andrew Irvine, may or may not have climbed Mount Everest. They were last seen a few hundred metres from the summit, before they died. Mallory was once asked why he wanted to climb Everest and he answered, 'Because it's there.' Taken out of context, there is no better reason for wanting to translate the Mahabharata. There is a steep mountain to climb. And I would not have dared had I not been able to stand on the shoulders of the three intellectual giants who have preceded me—Kisori Mohan Ganguli, Manmatha Nath Dutt and J.A.B. van Buitenen.

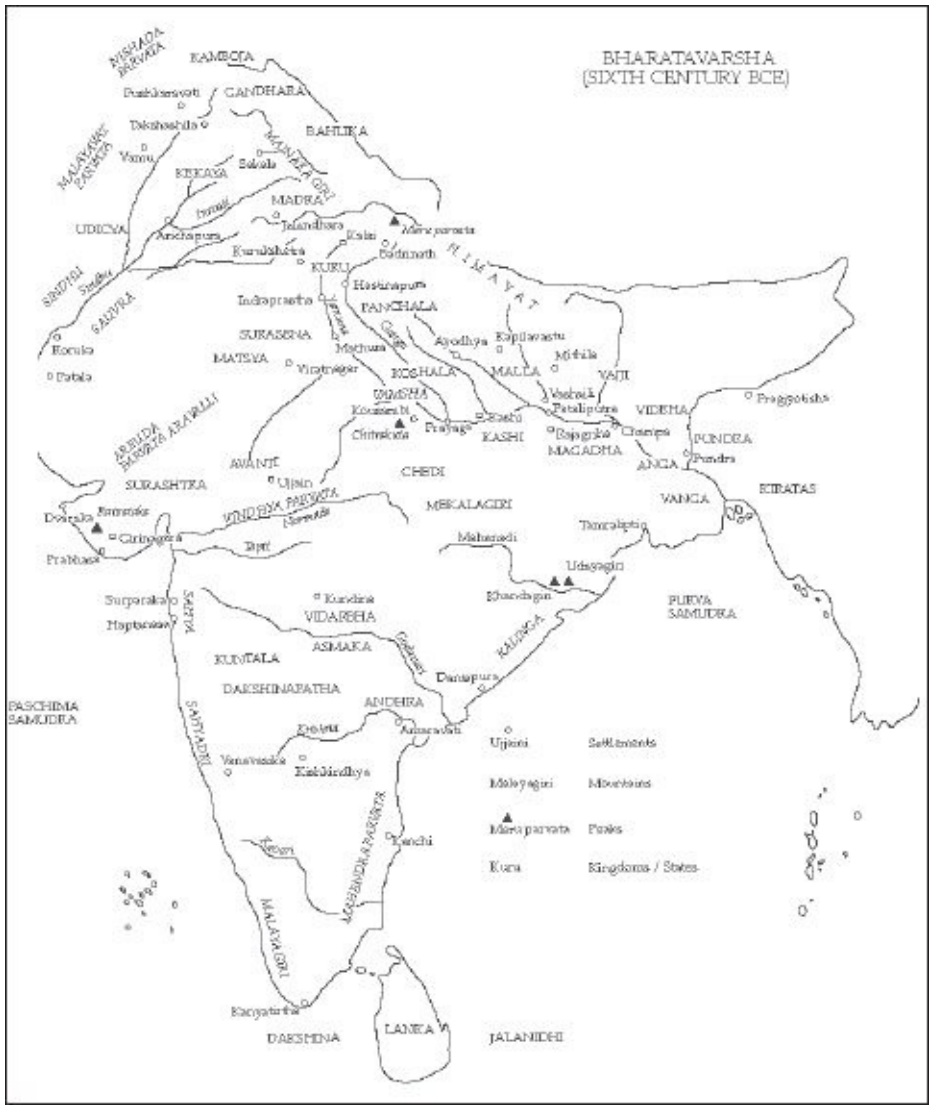
Bibek Debroy

# Family Tree

*Bharata/Puru Lineage*




Duhshanta
Shakuntala
4 other sons
Bharata
m
Sunanda
Bhumanyu
m
Vijaya
Suhotra
m
Suvarna
Yashodhara
m
Hasti (established Hastinapura)
Vikunthana
m
Sudeva
Ajamidha
(had 2400 sons)
m
Kaikeyi
Nagi
Gandhari
Vimala
Riksha
Tapati
m
Samvarana
Subhagi
m
Kuru
Sanpriya
m
Viduratha
Amrita
m
Arugvata
Suyasa
m
Parikshit
Sukumari
m
Bhimasena
Sunanda
m
Paryashrava (Pratipa)
Devapi
Satyavati
(Gandhakali)
m
Shantanu
m
Ganga
Bahlika
Devavrata (Bhishma)
Dvaipayana
Vichitravirya
m
Amba
Chitrangada
Ambalika
Dhritarashtra (100 sons)
Pandu
m
Kunti
Vidura
Duryodhana
Duhshasana
Vikarna
Chitrasena
Madri
Devaki
m
Yudhishthira
m
Droupadi
Bhima
Droupadi
Youdheya
Prativindhya
Hidimba
m
m
Baladhara
Ghatotkacha
Sarvaga
Subhadra
m
Arjuna
m
Droupadi
Uttara
m
Abhimanyu
Karenumati
m
Nakula
m
Droupadi
Madravati
m
Parikshit
Niramitra
Janamejaya
m
Vapushtama
Shatanika
Shanku
Vijaya
m
Sahadeva
m
Droupadi
Ashvamedhadatta
Suhotra


BHARATAVARSHA
(SIXTH CENTURY BCE)
NISHADA MLECHHA
KAMBOJA
Pushkaravati
GANDHARA
Takshashila
BAHLIKA
MALAVAKAS
DASERKA
Vanu
KEKAYA
Sakala
MADRA
Iravati
Jalandhara
UDICYA
Ayodhya
Kapilavastu
Mithila
VAJJI
Vaishali
Pataliputra
VIDEHA
Champa
PUNDRA
Pundra
ANGA
VANGA
KIRATAS
Tamralipti
Udayagiri
Bharukachha
PURVA SAMUDRA
Surparaka
Naptavana
Kundina
VIDARBHA
ASMAKA
KALINGA
Dantapura
DAKSHINAPATHA
ANDHRA
Amaravati
PASCHIMA SAMUDRA
Vanavasaka
Kishkindhya
Kanchi
Ujjaini
Settlements
Malayagiri
Mountains
Mena parvata
Peaks
Kuru
Kingdoms / States
Kanyatirtha
DAKSHINA
LANKA
JALANIDHI

# Anushasana Parva

*Anushasana* means instruction or advice and Anushasana Parva continues with Bhishma's instructions. In the 18-parva classification, Anushasana Parva is the thirteenth. In the 100-parva classification, Anushasana Parva constitutes Sections 87 and 88. Anushasana Parva has 154 chapters. In the numbering of the chapters in Anushasana Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Anushasana Parva.



Section Eighty-Seven

# *Dana Dharma Parva*

*This section has 6450 shlokas and 152 chapters.*


*Chapter 1738(57): 44 shlokas*
*Chapter 1739(58): 40 shlokas*
*Chapter 1740(59): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1741(60): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1742(61): 93 shlokas*
*Chapter 1743(62): 51 shlokas*
*Chapter 1744(63): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1745(64): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1746(65): 63 shlokas*
*Chapter 1747(66): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1748(67): 33 shlokas*
*Chapter 1749(68): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1750(69): 33 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1752(71): 12 shlokas*
*Chapter 1753(72): 48 shlokas*
*Chapter 1754(73): 15 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1760(79): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1761(80): 45 shlokas*
*Chapter 1762(81): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1763(82): 47 shlokas*
*Chapter 1764(83): 57 shlokas*
*Chapter 1765(84): 81 shlokas*
*Chapter 1766(85): 70 shlokas*
*Chapter 1767(86): 34 shlokas*
*Chapter 1768(87): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1769(88): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1770(89): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1771(90): 47 shlokas*

*Chapter 1772(91): 45 shlokas*
*Chapter 1773(92): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1774(93): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1775(94): 44 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1777(96): 54 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1780(99): 33 shlokas*
*Chapter 1781(100): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1782(101): 65 shlokas*
*Chapter 1783(102): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1784(103): 37 shlokas*
*Chapter 1785(104): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1786(105): 62 shlokas*
*Chapter 1787(106): 42 shlokas*
*Chapter 1788(107): 148 shlokas*
*Chapter 1789(108): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1790(109): 69 shlokas*
*Chapter 1791(110): 137 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1793(112): 113 shlokas*
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*Chapter 1795(114): 11 shlokas*
*Chapter 1796(115): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1797(116): 76 shlokas*
*Chapter 1798(117): 41 shlokas*
*Chapter 1799(118): 28 shlokas*
*Chapter 1800(119): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1801(120): 14 shlokas*
*Chapter 1802(121): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1803(122): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1804(123): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1805(124): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1806(125): 38 shlokas*
*Chapter 1807(126): 50 shlokas*
*Chapter 1808(127): 51 shlokas*
*Chapter 1809(128): 59 shlokas*
*Chapter 1810(129): 55 shlokas*
*Chapter 1811(130): 57 shlokas*
*Chapter 1812(131): 58 shlokas*

*Chapter 1813(132): 58 shlokas*
*Chapter 1814(133): 63 shlokas*
*Chapter 1815(134): 57 shlokas*
*Chapter 1816(135): 142 shlokas*
*Chapter 1817(136): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1818(137): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1819(138): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1820(139): 31 shlokas*
*Chapter 1821(140): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1822(141): 30 shlokas*
*Chapter 1823(142): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1824(143): 44 shlokas*
*Chapter 1825(144): 51 shlokas*
*Chapter 1826(145): 41 shlokas*
*Chapter 1827(146): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1828(147): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1829(148): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1830(149): 13 shlokas*
*Chapter 1831(150): 9 shlokas*
*Chapter 1832(151): 51 shlokas*
*Chapter 1833(152): 13 shlokas*

Dana *means gifts, donations, giving things away in charity. So this section is about the dharma to be followed in dana.*

# Chapter 1738(57)

‘Yudhishthira said, “On listening to your words now, I am confused and am thinking repeatedly. The earth has been deprived of a large number of kings who were prosperous. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I have conquered the earth and have obtained hundreds of kingdoms. O grandfather! I am tormented because I have killed crores of men. What will now happen to the best of women? They are deprived of their husbands, sons, maternal uncles and brothers. We have slain our seniors, our kin and our well-wishers. There is no doubt that we will descend into hell, with our heads facing downwards. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I wish to yoke my body to fierce austerities. O lord of the earth! I desire that you should instruct me about the truth.”’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘Hearing what Yudhishthira had said, the great-minded Bhishma used his accomplished intelligence to examine them. He then spoke to Yudhishthira. “This is wonderful and a mystery. Listen. I will tell you the truth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is about the ends that are obtained after death. Heaven is obtained through austerities. Fame is obtained through austerities. O lord! A long life and objects of pleasure are obtained through austerities. O bull among the Bharata lineage! *Jnana*, *vijnana*,[1] recovery from disease, beauty, wealth and good fortune are obtained through austerities. Riches are obtained through austerities. Refraining from speech provides knowledge. Through donations, one obtains objects of enjoyment. One obtains life through brahmacharya. The fruits of non-violence are beauty. Through an act of initiation, one obtains birth in a good family. Those who subsist on fruits and roots obtain kingdoms. Those who subsist on leaves obtain heaven. A person who only drinks water goes to heaven. By bathing, one obtains even greater riches. Through serving the preceptor, one obtains knowledge. Through always performing funeral ceremonies, one obtains offspring. Through initiating oneself into a vow that one will only eat vegetables, one obtains a large number of cows. One is said to obtain heaven by subsisting on grass. By bathing thrice a day, one obtains women. If one only subsists on air, one obtains the fruits of a sacrifice. A brahmana who bathes every day and performs meditation in the morning and the evening, becomes like Daksha. One obtains kingdoms by observing austerities in a desert. A person who fasts to death obtains the vault of heaven. If one lies down on the bare ground, one obtains beds and houses. If one is attired in bark and tattered rags, one obtains garments and ornaments. Those who are rich in austerities and engaged in yoga obtain beds, seats and vehicles. It has been said that a person who enters the fire goes to Brahma’s world. By refraining from savouring good tastes, one obtains good fortune. By refraining from flesh, one obtains offspring who have long lives. If a person dwells in *udvasa*,[2] he becomes a lord of men. O best among men! A person who speaks the truth finds delight with the gods. Fame results from donations. Non-violence results in recovery from disease. By serving brahmanas, one obtains a kingdom and the status of becoming a brahmana. By donating things to drink, one obtains eternal fame. By donating food, one satisfies all the desires that one possesses. A person who assures all beings is freed from all kinds of sorrow. Through serving the gods, one obtains kingdoms and celestial beauty. By offering the light of lamps, a man obtains vision. If one gives beautiful objects, one obtains memory and intelligence. By refraining from fragrances

and garlands, one obtains great fame. Those who sport long hair and beards obtain offspring. O king! If a person is initiated and consecrated in a vow that involves fasting for twelve years, he obtains the special region meant for heroes. O bull among men! If one bestows one's daughter according to the *brahma* form of marriage,[3] one obtains female servants, male servants, ornaments, fields and houses. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a person performs sacrifices and fasts, he goes to heaven. A man who renders offerings of flowers obtains the eternal spot. A man who gives away one thousand cows whose horns have been decorated with gold, obtains the auspicious world of the gods in heaven. This was stated in an assembly of the sages and the gods. A man may give away a *kapila*[4] cow and her calf, with gold entrusting the tips of her horns and with a brass vessel to milk her. Because of the qualities of the cow, he will obtain all the objects that he desires. A person who donates a cow in this way obtains fruits as long as she possesses hair on her body. In the world hereafter, he saves all the sons and grandsons of his lineage, for seven generations.[5] With *dakshina*, a person may give away a cow with beautiful horns that are decorated with gold, along with a brass vessel to milk her, an expensive upper garment and sesamum seed to a brahmana. Such a person obtains the world of the Vasus with ease. In the world hereafter, a man may be tied down by his own deeds in this world and descend into the terrible darkness of hell. The donation of a cow saves him, like a boat with the wind saves in the great ocean. A person who bestows his daughter according to the brahma form of marriage, donates land to a brahmana, or donates food in the proper way, obtains Purandara's world. A person who donates a house with all the qualities to a brahmana who is engaged in studying and possesses the qualities and character, obtains the world of Uttara Kuru. By donating bulls that can bear the burden, a man obtains the world of the Vasus. It is said that heaven can be obtained through donations of gold, though the gift of pure gold is superior to this. By donating an umbrella one obtains an excellent house. By giving shoes one obtains a vehicle. By giving clothes one obtains the fruits of excellent beauty. By giving fragrances a man becomes famous among the gods. If a person touches a tree full of flowers or a tree full of fruits and gives it to a brahmana, he obtains an excellent house that is full of many jewels and beautiful women.

A person who donates food, drink and juices obtains all the kinds of fruits that he desires. There is no doubt that a person who gives houses and covers gets those objects back. If a man gives garlands, incense, fragrances, unguents, objects required for a bath and wreaths to a brahmana, he is without disease and obtains a place in the worlds meant for kings. O king! A man who gives a house full of seeds and beautiful beds to a brahmana, obtains an excellent and auspicious house that is full of many jewels. A man who gives a fragrant bed, covered with a colourful spread, to a brahmana, easily obtains a beautiful and pleasant wife who is faithful. A man who lies down on a bed of heroes follows the grandfather.[6] There is nothing superior to this. This is what the supreme rishis have said." On hearing these words, the descendant of the Kuru lineage was delighted. He desired the path meant for brave ones and no longer found the *ashrama* of a householder disagreeable. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O lord! Yudhishthira spoke to the other Pandavas. "You should find the grandfather's words acceptable." All the Pandavas and the illustrious Droupadi agreed and applauded Yudhishthira's words.'

# Chapter 1739(58)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O bull among the Kurus! Outside of the Vedas, there are other kinds of gifts that have been mentioned. In your view, out of these, which one is special? O lord! I have a supreme curiosity about this. When a giver gives a gift, how does that gift follow him?[7] Tell me this.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O bull among the Bharata lineage! Assurance towards all creatures, compassion towards someone who is suffering, giving what is desired to someone who is thirsty and asking for it and gifts that are given without thinking of them as gifts—such gifts are said to be the best. These gifts follow the giver. Gifts of gold, gifts of cattle and gifts of land are regarded as purifiying. These liberate from evil acts. O tiger among men! Always donate these to virtuous people. There is no doubt that gifts save men from sins. A person who wishes to make his gifts eternal must always give what is desired in this world and what is loved in his house to recipients who possess the qualities. A person who does what is agreeable obtains what is agreeable and is loved in this world. He is loved by beings, in this world and in the next. O Yudhishthira! If a person is proud and does not honour through gifts someone who is hopefully asking, despite possessing the capacity, is cruel. A person who shows favours towards an enemy who has fallen on hard times and has sought refuge, is supreme among men. O son! There is no man equal to a person who satisfies the hunger of a learned person who is emaciated and suffering because his means of subsistence have been disrupted. O Kounteya! One must use every means possible to aid a humble, self-controlled and virtuous person who does not have sons and wives and is suffering, even if he doesn’t ask. There are those who subsist on whatever they have been able to obtain and do not pronounce benedictions on gods and humans.[8] They deserve to be worshipped and are always spirited. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They are like virulent serpents and protect yourself from them.[9] Use spies to test if they are the best among brahmanas. O Kouravya! They must always be honoured with good houses that have servants and garments and with all the objects of desire that bring happiness. O Yudhishthira! Those who follow dharma and are the performers of auspicious deeds think that such tasks have purified their devotion, if those gifts are accepted. There are brahmanas who have bathed in learning and have bathed in vows. They do not depend on anyone else for a living. They are rigid in their vows, study quietly and resort to austerities. They are pure, self-controlled and satisfied with their own wives. Anything good done to them follows the donor in future worlds. Brahmanas obtain merits by offering oblations into the *agnihotra* fire, morning and evening. The same merits are obtained by giving to brahmanas who have cleansed their souls. This is like a sacrifice with dakshina, purified by devotion. O son! Perform this sacrifice through giving, since it is superior to all sacrifices. O Yudhishthira! When one touches water and gives gifts, it is like a sacrifice. It is like touching water and performing worship and one is freed from all debts.[10] There are people who are not prone to anger and do not desire even a blade of grass. They, and others who are pleasant in speech, are the ones who should be worshipped. They do not prize gifts highly, nor do they solicit them. But they must be protected like sons and I bow down before them. They provide freedom from fear. Officiating priests, priests and preceptors may be mild, but they hold the *brahman*. Those brahmanas can pacify the energy created by any kshatriya. O Yudhishthira! Since you are a king, you may think yourself to be powerful. However, without giving to brahmanas, you will not enjoy that prosperity. O

unblemished one! Remain established in your own dharma. For the sake of your prosperity and for the sake of your power, use whatever riches you possess to honour brahmanas. Wherever the brahmanas may be, bow your head down before them. Depending on their happiness and inclination, let them take delight in you, as does a son. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! They are extremely favourably inclined and are your well-wishers. They are satisfied with only a little. Who other than you can look towards ensuring a means of subsistence for them? In this world, the eternal dharma of a woman is to depend on her husband. He is like a god and she has no other objective. For us, the brahmanas are like that. O son! If the brahmanas see that they are dishonoured and that the kshatriyas always base themselves on terrible deeds, they will abandon us. In this world, we will then be without the Vedas, without name, without fame, without health and without sacrifices. Without resorting to brahmanas, what is the purpose of our remaining alive? This is the way eternal dharma has been followed. O king! In earlier times, kings used to serve brahmanas. It has been heard that vaishyas used to serve kings and shudras served vaishyas. The brahmana was like a blazing fire. Without being able to approach or touch, the shudra used to worship him from a distance. But the vaishya and the kshatriya could approach and touch. Brahmanas are mild in character. They are truthful in conduct and protect the true dharma. However, when they are enraged, they can behave like venomous serpents. They are superior to what is inferior. But they are also superior to what is superior. Kshatriyas can torment with their energy and strength. However, they are pacified through the energy and austerities of brahmanas. My father is not loved more by me.[11] My son is not as loved. O king! My grandfather is not as loved, nor the life in my body. O bull among the Bharata lineage! It is the truth that there is nothing I love more on earth than you. But it is also the truth that I love brahmanas more. O descendant of the Pandu lineage! I am telling you this truthfully. Through this truth, I will go to the world where Shantanu has gone. I can see that virtuous and pure world, with Brahma at the forefront. O son! I will go there and live there for an eternal number of days. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! O king! I have seen those worlds, which I will obtain because of what I have done for brahmanas. I am not tormented."'

## Chapter 1740(59)

'Yudhishthira asked, "There may be two[12] who are equal in conduct, purity, learning and birth. Between donating to either, which is superior, giving to the one who asks or giving to the one who does not ask?"

'Bhishma replied, "O Partha! It has been said that giving to the person who does not ask is superior. In a miserable state, one who has fortitude deserves greater worship than one who does not have fortitude. A kshatriya's fortitude is in protection. A brahmana's fortitude is in not asking for riches. A brahmana who has fortitude, learning and contentment pleases the gods. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! An effort made to solicit has been said to show lack of control. A person who solicits always acts like a bandit towards beings. A person who solicits confronts death, though a person who gives does not confront death. O Yudhishthira! Through the act of giving, a donor revives and also revives his own self. Compassion is supreme dharma and one should give to those who seek. However, for

those who are suffering and do not solicit, one should respectfully use every possible means to make them accept. If such supreme among brahmanas reside in your kingdom, they must be regarded as fire covered with ashes and efforts must be made to treat them accordingly. They can even consume the earth through the fire of their austerities. Possessing jnana, vijnana, austerities and yoga, they should be worshipped. O scorcher of enemies! Such brahmanas deserve to be worshipped in every way. They must be given many kinds of gifts, even if they do not ask and do not solicit. There are fruits that are obtained from properly offering oblations into the agnihotra fire in the morning and the evening. It is said that the fruits obtained from giving to brahmanas who are learned in the Vedas and follow the vows are equal. There are brahmanas who are learned in the Vedas and have bathed themselves in the vows. They do not depend on anyone else for a living. They are rigid in their vows, study privately and observe austerities. O Kounteya! Such brahmanas must be invited and be given excellent houses with servants and garments and all the other objects of desire. O Yudhishthira! They know about dharma and are subtle in their insight. They will think that it is their duty to receive such gifts that have been purified with devotion. There may be brahmanas who are away from home, with their wives waiting for their return, like farmers waiting for the rain. The wives must be fed and food given for the other dependents at home. O son! If a brahmana *brahmachari* with self-control takes food at your house in the morning, it is as if he satisfies the three sacrificial fires. O son! If the act of feeding takes place at midday, donate cattle, gold and garments and Indra will be pleased with you because of this. O Yudhishthira! This is the third sacrifice, in which, gifts are given to the gods, the ancestors and brahmanas and is for the Vishvadevas.[13] Non-violence towards all creatures, giving everyone a proper share, self-control, renunciation, fortitude and truthfulness are like the bath at the end of a sacrifice. This is the way this sacrifice is conducted, purified by devotion and with dakshina. O son! It is superior to all sacrifices and should always be performed."'

## Chapter 1741(60)

'Yudhishthira said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I wish to know the truth about the great fruits obtained from donations and sacrificial rites. Where are those fruits obtained, in this world or in the next? Which is superior and what is the nature of the fruits? You are learned and I am asking you. Tell me about dana dharma. O father![14] Tell me which is better, that which is done from inside the sacrificial altar, or that which is done with faith and non-violence.[15] O grandfather! Tell me."

'Bhishma replied, "O son! A kshatriya is always engaged in terrible deeds. For him, sacrifices are the duty and donations purify him. But virtuous people do not receive from kings who perform wicked deeds. That is the reason kings perform sacrifices with a lot of dakshina. Gifts are received from a king who donates with devotion and this is supreme and a great cleanser. One must therefore be devoted to the vows of sacrifices and give objects to brahmanas who are friendly, virtuous, knowledgable about the Vedas and possessing good conduct and austerities. The outcome is dependent on the way one acts. Perform sacrifices and give tasty food and dakshina to virtuous people. When you give, think that in that task of giving, you are performing a sacrifice. If you honour

officiating priests, you will also obtain a share in their merits. You must sustain brahmanas who bear the burden of many offspring. You will then obtain as many offspring as the creator.[16] Those who are virtuous in pursuit of dharma always nurture those who are righteous. In every way, you must support men who suffer from many burdens. O Yudhishthira! You are prosperous. Therefore, you must give brahmanas cattle, bulls, food, umbrellas, garments and footwear. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Give clarified butter to those who perform sacrifices and also horses, vehicles, houses and beds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! These are easy to do and bring prosperity to the giver. One must search out brahmanas who are not liked and whose means of subsistence has suffered.[17] Directly or indirectly, their livelihood must be ensured. For kshatriyas, this is superior to performing royal sacrifices and horse sacrifices. In this way, you will be cleansed of sin and purified, and you will obtain heaven. You will be able to replenish your treasury again and rule the kingdom. You will obtain a great deal of riches and become a brahmana.[18] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Protect your own means of subsistence and that of other people. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Always support brahmanas in their yoga and *kshema*.[19] If they are not protected and are killed, then this will lead to the destruction of all pleasure. The king will suffer decay. All the subjects will be killed and destroyed. A king who says that he is the protector, but does not protect, should be collectively killed, like a dog that is diseased and mad. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When a king does not protect and the subjects commit wicked deeds, one-fourth of those sins are vested in the king. Some have said that they vest in him in entirety. Others have determined it as half. However, we have heard Manu's instructions and hold it to be one-fourth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When a king protects the subjects properly, one-fourth of all the good and auspicious deeds that they do vests in the king. O Yudhishthira! As long as you live, make the lives of all the subjects depend on you. Be like Parjanya to beings and like a giant tree to birds. Be like Kubera to the *rakshasas* and like Shatakratu to the immortals. O scorcher of enemies! Let the lives of kin and well-wishers depend on you."'

## Chapter 1742(61)

'Yudhishthira said, "The sacred texts urge us—give this, give that. The kings give many things. Which of these is the best donation?"

'Bhishma replied, "Among the many gifts, the earth is said to be the first. It does not move and is indestructible. Land yields all the supreme objects of desire. It yields garments, jewels, animals, grain and barley. Among all beings, a giver of land prospers for an eternal number of years. As long as the land lasts, a giver of land earns prosperity. O Yudhishthira! There is nothing that is superior to giving land. We have heard that earlier, everyone gave a little bit of land. Since all of them gave a little bit of land, everyone enjoys the earth. In this world and in the next, a man sustains himself on the basis of his deeds. The earth is prosperity and is a great goddess. She does agreeable things for a person who gives her. A lord of the earth who gives the indestructible earth as dakshina is again born as a man and becomes a king. Enjoyment is dependent on what one has given. That is the determination of dharma. One must give the earth or give up one's body in battle. It is said that this is supremely beneficial for kshatriyas and their relatives. We have heard that donating the earth purifies the giver. If

a man is wicked in conduct, has killed a brahmana or has indulged in falsehood—all these sins are cleansed. One is freed from these sins. If a king has performed wicked deeds, the virtuous wish to accept only land from him and nothing else. The earth purifies, like a mother. There is an eternal and sacred name of the goddess and that is Priyadatta.[20] This is a name known to both the giver and the recipient, because it is supremely loved. A king who gives the earth to a brahmana obtains it back. However, an owner of land must never give that prosperous gift of land to an unworthy recipient. If he acts in this way, that gift vanishes. There is no doubt that a person who desires land should act in this way and no other. A person who takes away a virtuous person's land will never get any land. A person who gives land to virtuous people will get land. After death, such a person, with dharma in his soul, will obtain great fame. O king! The brahmanas always praise a person who gives land to righteous people. He has no enemies and the entire earth praises him. In an attempt to ensure subsistence, if a man commits any wicked deeds, all those are cleansed by giving away as much of land as can be covered by a cow hide. Kings who are narrow in their deeds and terrible in their deeds should be told that they can be purified by making the supreme gift of land. The ancient ones thought that there was little difference between a person who performs a horse sacrifice and one who gives land to virtuous people. Learned ones may have doubts about other kinds of good deeds. But they are incapable of entertaining doubts about the supreme gift of land. An immensely wise person gives land, since this is the same as giving gold, silver, garments, jewels, pearls, riches and everything else. Austerities, sacrifices, learning, good conduct, lack of greed, devotion to the truth and worship of seniors and the gods—all these are vested in a person who gives away land. There are those who are engaged in what brings benefit to their masters and cast aside their lives in the field of battle. They are successful and go to Brahma's world. However, even they are surpassed by those who give away land. The mother nurtures her son with her milk. In that way, all the tastes on earth favour a person who gives away land. If a person gives away land, Yama's servants, the staff of punishment, heat, extremely fierce fires and Varuna's terrible noose are unable to touch him. If a person is tranquil in his soul and gives away land, the ancestors in the world of the ancestors and the gods in the world of the gods are satisfied. If a man gives away land to someone who is emaciated, about to die and suffering from a means of subsistence, thereby granting him sustenance, this is like performing a sacrifice. With her udders overflowing with milk, a cow rushes towards her calf. O immensely fortunate one! In that way, the earth runs towards someone who gives away land. If a person gives away land tilled by the plough, or sown, or with crops, and thereby provides the greatest refuge, all his desires are met. If a man persuades a brahmana, who has good conduct, sacrifices to the fire and is pure in vows, to accept land, he doesn't go to Yama's abode. From one day to another, the moon waxes. In that way, every time the land given by someone yields crops, his own crops increase.

'"In this connection, those who know about the ancient accounts chant a song about land. On hearing this, Jamadagni's son[21] gave away the earth to Kashyapa. 'Accept me.[22] Donate me. By giving me, you will obtain me. Anything given away in this life will be obtained later in the next life.' A brahmana who bases himself on the brahman and recites this at a funeral ceremony, merges with the brahman. Those who cause great injuries in the course of undertaking a wicked sacrifice can obtain atonement in this way and save ten generations.[23] A person who knows this injunction of the Vedas also benefits in that way. It has been held that the earth is the eternal origin of all creatures. After a

king has been consecrated, he should be made to hear this. On hearing this, he should give land to virtuous people and not take it away from them. There is no doubt that all of a king's riches are meant for brahmanas. The first sign of prosperity in a kingdom is a king who is knowledgable about dharma. If their king doesn't know about dharma and is a non-believer, they will not awake in happiness. Nor will they sleep happily. Because of his wicked acts, the men will always be anxious. The many kinds of yoga and kshema will then be non-existent in the kingdom. However, if the king is wise and follows dharma, they will awake in happiness. They will also sleep happily. The subjects will also be restrained through the king's auspicious deeds. Yoga and kshema will shower down and they will prosper in their own tasks. A person who donates the earth is truly a man. He is born in a noble lineage. He is a friend and is a performer of auspicious deeds. He is benevolent and valorous. Men who give prosperous tracts of land to brahmanas who are learned in the Vedas blaze in their energy on earth, like suns. When they are sown on the ground, seeds sprout into crops. In that way, objects of desire are the crops for those who give away land. Aditya, Varuna, Vishnu, Brahma, Soma, Hutashana[24] and the illustrious wielder of the trident[25] find delight in a person who gives away land. Men are born on earth and it is on earth that they faithfully wander. There are four kinds of creatures that have the qualities of the earth.[26] O lord of the earth! The earth is the mother and the father of the universe. O lord of men! There is no other element that is its equal.

'"O Yudhishthira! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Brihaspati and Indra. Maghavan performed one hundred sacrifices, giving away copious quantities of dakshina. He then asked Brihaspati, the supreme among eloquent ones, 'O illustrious one! What is the single gift that ensures bliss in heaven? What grants inexhaustible and excellent fruits? O supreme among eloquent ones! Tell me this.' Thus addressed by Indra of the gods, the immensely energetic Brihaspati, the priest of the gods, replied to Shatakratu. 'O slayer of Vritra! An immensely wise person who gives gold, gives cattle and gives land is freed from all sins. O Indra of the gods! O lord! But there is nothing that is superior to giving away land. I think it is superior and the learned ones have also said this. O best of the gods! Among the brave ones who are killed in battle and among the ones who give to those who solicit gifts, there is no one who is superior to the one who gives away land. There are those who are engaged in ensuring the welfare of their masters and give up their lives in battle. Those brave ones go to Brahma's world. But they cannot surpass the ones who give away land. A man who gives away land saves eleven generations of his lineage, the five generations that will follow and the six generations that have gone to the nether regions. O Purandara! A man who gives away the earth, with all its riches, is freed from all sins and obtains greatness in the world of heaven. A king who gives away the prosperous earth, with qualities that satisfy all the objects of desire, becomes the king of kings because of that supreme gift. O Vasava! When the earth, with all its objects of desire, are given to someone like Kashyapa, all the creatures think that it has been given to them. O one with the thousand eyes! It is like a cow that yields all the objects of desire and satisfies the best of wishes. A man who gives this, goes to heaven. O Indra of the gods! It has flows of honey. The flows of water in the rivers are like milk and curds. The donation of land satisfies everything. O king! By giving away land, a king is said to be freed from all sins. There is no other gift that is superior to the giving away of land. If a man uses his sword to conquer the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean, and then gives it away, men in this world talk about him as long as fame is talked about. O Purandara!

If a man gives away the earth with all its sacred juices, then the qualities that he has obtained by donating land are never destroyed in this world. O Shakra! A king who desires his own prosperity and desires his own happiness must always follow the proper rites and give away land to worthy recipients. If a man commits sins and then gives away land to brahmanas, he abandons all those sins, like a snake casts aside old skin. O Shakra! If a man gives away the earth, with its oceans, rivers, mountains and groves, that is like giving away everything. The donation of the earth is like giving away lakes, wells, streams and rivers. Because of the earth's moisture, it is like giving away the best of juices. The donation of the earth is like giving away herbs full of juices, trees that are covered with flowers and fruits and groves and hills. There are sacrifices like *agnishtoma*, performed with the giving away of a lot of dakshina. However, the fruits obtained from those are nothing compared to those obtained from giving away land. The giver of land saves ten generations.[27] However, having given land, if one subsequently takes that away, ten generations are cast into hell. If a person promises to give, but does not give later, or having given, if he takes it back, on the instruction of Death, such a person is bound up in Varuna's nooses. Those who offer oblations into the fire, always perform sacrifices, tend to their beloved guests even if they lack servants and sustain the best of brahmanas—are not approached by Yama. O Purandara! The king must repay the debt that he owes to brahmanas. That apart, he must save the weak and the distressed among other varnas. O lord of the gods! O best among the gods! One must never touch land that belongs to someone else, especially to a brahmana who lacks a means of subsistence. If tears fall from the eyes of such miserable and suffering brahmanas because the land has been taken away, then three generations of the lineage are destroyed. O one with the thousand eyes! If a person re-establishes a king who has been dislodged from his kingdom, such a person obtains greatness in the vault of heaven. There may be a person who conquers the earth with the valour of his arms and that land is always full of sugar cane, barley, wheat, cattle, horses and other kinds of mounts, being covered with jewels above the surface, as well as all kinds of riches under the surface. If he gives this away, that is known as a land sacrifice and earns the inexhaustible regions. All his sins are washed away. He is radiant, revered by the virtuous. If he gives away the earth to virtuous people, he obtains greatness in this world. O Shakra! If a drop of oil falls on water, it extends on every side. In that way, if land is given away, the fruits are enhanced on every side. O Shakra! There are brave kings who are the ornaments of assemblies. Without retreating, they are slain on the field of battle and obtain Brahma's world. Noble women, adorned in divine garlands and well versed in dancing and singing, tend to them there. O Indra of the gods! Those who give land always obtain heaven.[28] They obtain bliss in heaven and are worshipped by the gods and the gandharvas. This happens to those who properly give away land to brahmanas. O Indra of the gods! If a man gives away land, one hundred apsaras, adorned with divine garlands, always serve him. If a person gives away land, he obtains a conch shell, an excellent seat, an umbrella, excellent horses, excellent elephants, flowers and stores of gold. His commands are never disobeyed and he is greeted with sounds of victory. O Purandara! Heaven constitutes the flowers and fruits of giving away land. A man who gives away land, the origin of immortality, obtains gold, flowers, herbs, *kusha* grass, refined gold and pastures. There is no gift that is equal to giving away land. There is no preceptor who is equal to the mother. There is no dharma equal to the truth. There is no wealth equal to donations.' Having heard this from the son of Angiras, Vasava gave the son of Angiras the

earth, with its riches and jewels. If these chants about the merit of giving away land are recited at funeral ceremonies, rakshasas and asuras will not take away any of the shares. There is then no doubt that anything offered to the ancestors will become inexhaustible. Therefore, on the occasion of a funeral ceremony, a learned brahmana must make other brahmanas listen to this, while they are engaged in the act of eating. O unblemished one! O tiger among the Bharata lineage! I have told you about the best of gifts. What do you wish to hear again?"'

## Chapter 1743(62)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O supreme among the Bharata lineage! In this world, when a king wishes to give away gifts to brahmanas, which are the ones with superior qualities? What satisfies them instantly? What follows when they are satisfied? O mighty-armed one! Instruct me about the great fruits of auspicious deeds. O king! In this world and in the world hereafter, what are the fruits of donations? I wish to hear about this from you. Tell me in detail."

'Bhishma replied, "Earlier, I asked Narada, who has the form of a celestial being, these questions. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will tell you what he told me. Listen.

'"Narada said, 'In ancient times, the gods and the rishis praised food. The sustenance of beings and all the sacrifices are based on food. There is no donation that is equal to food. There has not been and there will not be. Therefore, men especially wish to donate food. In this world, food provides energy and life is based on food. O lord! It is food that holds up everything in the world and in the universe. In this world, householders and mendicants sustain themselves on food. There is no doubt, and it is evident, that life depends on food. If one desires for one's own prosperity, even if this means causing suffering to the family, one should donate food to great-souled brahmanas who are begging for alms. If a person donates food to an accomplished brahmana who asks for it, then, in the world hereafter, the donor ensures the best riches for himself. There may be an aged guest who arrives at a house, exhausted and far from home. If the householder desires his own prosperity, he should worship him. O king! If a person casts aside anger, is without anger and is extremely good in conduct, donating food in this way, then he obtains happiness in this world and in heaven. A guest who has arrived must not be disrespected or refused. Gifts to even *shvapakas*[29] and bitches aren't destroyed. There may be a person who is exhausted and has never been seen before.[30] If clean food is given to such a person, then great dharma is obtained. O lord of men! A man who affectionately offers food to ancestors, gods, rishis, brahmanas and guests obtains great and auspicious fruits. If a person has committed wicked deeds and donates food to someone who asks for it, then his sins are destroyed, especially if the recipient happens to be a brahmana. A gift of food to a brahmana becomes inexhaustible and that to a shudra yields great fruits. This is the difference between donating food to brahmanas and to shudras. When a brahmana solicits food, he should not be asked about his *gotra*, conduct, learning, country of residence or birth. Food must be given to this alms-seeker, even if he doesn't ask for it. O king! There is no doubt that if a man gives food, he plants a tree of food that provides all the objects of desire, in this world and in the next. Like farmers who wait for excellent rains, the ancestors hope that their sons and grandsons will donate food. The brahmana is a great creature. If he himself comes

and asks to be given, whether one gives voluntarily or involuntarily,[31] one obtains auspicious merits. For all creatures, the brahmana is a guest. He is the one who eats first. When a brahmana seeks alms at a house and returns after being treated well, the householder's prosperity increases. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! After death, he is born in a family that enjoys great objects of desire. If a man gives food in this world, he obtains the supreme objective. A person who gives sweetmeats and sweet food resides in heaven and is honoured there. Food is the life of men. Everything is established on food. A person who donates food gets animals, daughters, riches and objects of pleasure. In this world, a person who donates food is described as a giver of life and he is said to be someone who has given everything. If a person follows the proper rites and gives food to guests and brahmanas, then the donor obtains happiness and even the gods worship him. The brahmana is a great being. He roams around on foot, but is like a field. Any seed that is sown there leads to great and auspicious fruits. A gift of food directly leads to delight in the giver and the recipient. The fruits of all other kinds of gifts are felt indirectly. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Know that birth results from food. Desire results from food. Know that dharma and artha result from food. It is food that cures disease. In an earlier *kalpa*, Prajapati said that food is amrita. Food is the earth, heaven and the sky. Everything is established in food. When food is destroyed, the five elements in the body are adversely affected. When food is destroyed, even the strongest of the strong is destroyed. In the absence of food, invitations, marriages and sacrifices vanish. O foremost among men! Even the brahman[32] is destroyed. Everything, mobile and immobile, is based on food. For dharma and artha in the three worlds, the learned give away food. O king! If a man donates food, in the three worlds, his strength, energy, fame, happiness, deeds and breath of life increase. The auspicious wind, the lord of the breath of life, accumulates water in the clouds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Shakra showers down rain from the clouds. Using his rays, the sun in the sky sucks up those juices from the earth. For the juices, the god, Prajapati, uses the sun and the wind in this way. From the clouds, rain pours down on the earth. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! That makes the goddess Vasumati gentle.[33] Crops are sown then and these sustain the universe. Flesh, fat, bones and semen result again. O lord of the earth! The creatures are generated from the semen. Agni and Soma create the semen and nurture it. In this way, the sun, the wind and semen are dependent on food. These are said to be parts of the same accumulation and creatures are generated from this. O bull among the Bharata lineage! If a person swiftly gives food to someone who comes to his house and asks for it, then he gives life and energy to creatures.'"

'Bhishma said, "O king! Having been thus addressed by Narada, I have always given food. Therefore, do not be malicious. Give food without any anxiety. O king! O lord! If you follow the rites and give food to brahmanas in the proper way, then you will obtain heaven. O lord of men! Hear about the worlds that are obtained through donations of food. In heaven, the abodes of those great-souled ones are resplendent. They are in many places, have many kinds of forms and possess many pillars. They are as white as the lunar disc and have nets of bells. Those abodes are both stationary and mobile and possess the complexion of the rising sun. They are populated by many hundred creatures that dwell on land and in the water. They dazzle like lapis lazuli and are decorated with silver and gold. Trees that yield all the objects of desire are placed in those abodes. There are tanks, roads, plains, wells and lakes everywhere. The roar of thousands of yoked vehicles can be heard.

There are mountains of food to be tasted and swallowed and garments and ornaments. There are rivers overflowing with milk and mountains of food. The palaces have the hue of white clouds and the beds shine in gold. Those who donate food obtain these. Therefore, give food. For great-souled ones who give food, these are the worlds obtained, meant for the performers of auspicious deeds. Therefore, on earth, men must specially donate food."'

## Chapter 1744(63)

'Yudhishthira said, "I have heard the words you have spoken about the ordinances on giving food. But tell me about the conjunctions of *nakshatras*,[34] under which, different kinds of gifts must be thought of."

'Bhishma replied, "In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Devaki and *devarshi* Narada. Narada, with a divine form, arrived in Dvaraka. Devaki, who had insight about dharma, asked him this question. Thus asked, devarshi Narada told her everything about the ordinances. O lord of the earth! Listen.

'"'Narada said, 'O immensely fortunate one! Under Krittika, if one satisfies brahmanas with *payasam*[35] and *ghee*, then one obtains the supreme among the worlds meant for the virtuous. Under Rohini, to free oneself from debts, one must give brahmanas the meat of deer, food, ghee, milk and other objects of food and drink. Under Somadaivata,[36] if one gives a cow and a calf, one goes from the world of men to the supreme world of heaven. Under Ardra, if a man fasts and gives *krisara*[37] mixed with oil, then he is freed from all difficulties, including those that are as razor-sharp as the edges of mountains. O beautiful one! Under Punarvasu, if one gives sweet cakes and food, one is reborn in a family that has a lot of food and one is also famous and handsome. Under Pushya, if one gives gold, whether it is worked or unworked, one obtains a world where one shines like Soma, though the world itself is dark. Under Ashlesha, if one gives a bull decorated with silver, one is freed from all fear and obtains prosperity. Under Magha, if a man fills vessels with sesamum, one obtains sons and animals in this world and happiness after death. Under Purva Phalguni, if a person desires prosperity, he should fast and give food and fermented sugar cane juice to brahmanas. Under Uttara Phalguni, if one follows the rites and gives rice[38] mixed with ghee and milk, one obtains greatness in heaven. It has been determined that any gifts made by a man under Uttara Phalguni lead to great and infinite fruits. Under Hasta, if a man fasts and gives a chariot yoked to four elephants, he obtains the supreme and auspicious worlds that satisfy every kind of desire. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Under Chitra, if one gives a bull and auspicious fragrances, one roams around in delight in this world, like the apsaras do in Nandana. Under Svati, if one gives riches, one obtains the auspicious worlds that one desires and also obtains great fame. Under Vishakha, if one gives a bull, a milk-yielding cow, a basket, a wagonload of paddy and garments, then one pleases the ancestors and the gods. After death, one obtains the infinite. He does not face any hardships and goes to the world of heaven. By giving what has been stated to brahmanas, one obtains whatever vocation one desires. It has also been determined that the donor is saved from hell and other hardships. Under Anuradha, if a man fasts and gives embroidered cloth and garments, then he obtains greatness in heaven for one

hundred *yugas*. If a person desires prosperity, under Jyeshtha, he should give brahmanas the herb known as *kalashaka*, with earth still clinging to the roots. He will then obtain the desired objective. Under Mula, if a person is controlled and gives roots and fruits to brahmanas, he pleases the ancestors and goes to the desired destination. Under Purva Ashadha, if a person fasts and gives vessels full of curd to a brahmana who has good lineage and conduct and is learned in the Vedas, then after death, the donor is born in a family that has an extremely large number of cattle. Under Uttara Ashadha, if one gives jars filled with barley, ghee and large quantities of fermented liquor, one obtains all the objects that one desires. Under Abhijit, by giving milk, honey and ghee to learned men who are always devoted to dharma, one obtains greatness in the world of heaven. Under Shravana, by giving blankets and thick cloth, one roams around the worlds on white vehicles. Under Dhanishtha, if a person is controlled and gives a vehicle yoked to bulls and garments with fine strands, immediately after death, he obtains a kingdom. Under Shatabhisha, if one gives fragrances, aloe and sandalwood, after death, one obtains a world with apsaras and eternal fragrances. Under Purva Bhadrapada, if a person gives *rajamasha*,[39] he is happy after death and obtains all kinds of food and fruits. Under Uttara, if a person gives goat meat, he pleases the ancestors and obtains the infinite after death. Under Revati, if a person gives a cow and a brass vessel for milking, after death, the cow presents itself before the donor and satisfies every desire. Under Ashvini, if a supreme among men gives a chariot yoked to horses, after death, one is radiant and is born in a family that possesses elephants, horses and chariots. Under Bharani, if a man gives brahmanas sesamum and a cow, after death, he obtains fame and a large number of cows.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “These are the signs associated with the nakshatras that have been indicated. Narada told Devaki about these and she told her daughters-in-law.”’

## Chapter 1745(64)

‘Bhishma said, “The illustrious Atri, the son of the grandfather, said that those who give gold give all the objects of desire. Harishchandra, Indra among men, spoke about gold as something that is pure, cleansing the donor and providing indestructible benefits to his forefathers. Manu said that the gift of a drink is a supreme gift. Therefore, tanks, wells and ponds must be dug. If a man undertakes the task of digging a well and always follows good conduct, then half of his sins are taken away. If cattle, brahmanas and virtuous people always drink from a waterbody dug by a man, then his entire lineage is saved. If a person offers an unrestricted supply of water during the summer, then he never faces any calamity or hardship. The illustrious Brihaspati, Pushan, Bhaga, the Ashvins and the fire god are satisfied with ghee. It is a supreme medication and this is supreme knowledge. It is a supreme liquid and leads to supreme fruits. A man who desires fruits, fame and nourishment must always purify himself and give ghee to brahmanas. If a person gives ghee to brahmanas in the month of Ashvina, then the gods, the two Ashvins, are pleased with him and confer beauty on him. If a person gives payasam mixed with ghee to brahmanas, rakshasas never attack his house. If a person gives vessels filled with water, he doesn’t die from thirst. He doesn’t face a hardship and isn’t seen to suffer from a difficulty. If a person is controlled and with supreme devotion gives to a best among

brahmanas, then he obtains one-sixth of the brahmana's merits. O Indra among kings! If a man gives a brahmana wood for the successful completion of his rites or for purposes of heating, he is always successful in his efforts. All of his different kinds of efforts are always successful. His form is seen to be progressively more radiant than that of the enemy. The illustrious fire god is always extremely pleased with such a person. He is never separated from his animals. Nor is he separated from victory in battle. If a person gives an umbrella, he obtains sons and prosperity. He doesn't suffer from any disease of the eyes and obtains a share in the sacrifices. If a person gives an umbrella during the summer or when it is raining, he never suffers from any mental anxiety. O brahmana![40] He is freed from all hardships and difficulties. Among all the kinds of gifts that can be given, a cart is the best. O immensely fortunate one! This was said by the illustrious rishi, Shandilya."'

## Chapter 1746(65)

'Yudhisthira asked, "O grandfather! If a brahmana's feet are being scorched by the heat and one gives him footwear, what fruits are obtained? Tell me that."

'Bhishma replied, "If a person is controlled and donates footwear to brahmanas, he is able to overcome all thorns and difficulties. O Yudhishthira! He is always placed above his enemies. O lord of the earth! His sparkling vehicle is yoked to mules and is decorated in silver and in gold. O Kounteya! He is stationed atop that. The merit is like that of donating a cart with well-trained mounts."

'Yudhishthira said, "O Kourava! Tell me once again about the fruits from donating sesamum, donating land, donating cattle and donating food, though you have already recounted it."

'Bhishma replied, "O Kounteya! Hear about the fruits from donating sesamum. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! It has to be given properly. Listen. Svayambhu created sesamum as the first food for the ancestors. Therefore, the party of the ancestors is delighted when sesamum is donated. If a person gives sesamum to brahmanas in the month of Magha,[41] then he does not have to see hell, which is populated by all kinds of unholy creatures. Offering sesamum to the ancestors is like performing all the sacrifices, with a desire for the fruits. Without a desire for the fruits, one should never perform a funeral ceremony where sesamum is offered. Sesamum was created from the body of *maharshi* Kashyapa. O lord! That is the reason the offering of sesamum has divine attributes. They provide nourishment and beauty and destroy sins. That is the reason the gifting of sesamum is superior to all other donations. The intelligent Apastamba,[42] Shankha, Likhita and maharshi Goutama went to heaven after donating sesamum. Brahmanas who are devoted to offering oblations of sesamum, control the urge towards sexual intercourse and perform acts of *pravritti* where oblations of cattle products are offered, are regarded as equal. It has been said that the donation of sesamum is superior to all other kinds of gifts. It has also been said that among all kinds of gifts, the gift of sesamum leads to inexhaustible fruits. O scorcher of enemies! On an earlier occasion, oblations of clarified butter weren't available. Having offered sesamum seeds, the rishi Kushika went to the supreme destination. O best among the Kuru lineage! I have thus spoken to you about the supreme gift of sesamum. I have also told you about the rules. It is because of those rules that the gift of sesamum is praised.

‘“After this, listen to what I have to say about the gods desiring to perform a sacrifice. O great king! They went and met Svayambhu Brahma. The gods went and met Brahma, desiring a part of the earth where they might perform the sacrifice. O king! They said, ‘We desire an auspicious spot where we can perform the sacrifice. O illustrious one! You are the lord of the earth and of heaven. O immensely fortunate one! With your permission, we wish to undertake a sacrifice. If the ground is used without permission, the fruits of the sacrifice aren’t obtained. You are the lord of everything in the universe, mobile and immobile. Therefore, we are seeking your permission.’ Brahma replied, ‘O bulls among the gods! O descendants of Kashyapa! I will give you a part of the earth. You can perform your sacrifice at that spot.’ The gods said, ‘O illustrious one! Our wishes have been satisfied. We will perform our sacrifice and give away large quantities of dakshina. Let this spot always be worshipped by the sages.’ Agastya, Kanva, Bhrigu, Atri, Vrishakapi, Asita and Devala came to the sacrifice performed by the gods. O undecaying one! The great-souled gods performed their sacrifice. At the right time, the bulls among gods completed the sacrifice. The gods performed their sacrifice on the slopes of the Himalayas. They earmarked one-sixth share of their sacrifice for those who would donate land. If a person donates a small bit of land reverentially, he does not suffer from any hardships and does not have to face any difficulties. If a person donates some land with a well-constructed house that is capable of withstanding heat, cold and wind, then even when his merits are exhausted, he is not dislodged from the world of the gods. O king! A wise person who gives such a refuge resides happily with Shakra and obtains greatness in heaven. There may be a learned brahmana who is in control of his senses and has been born in a family of preceptors. If he is given a house in which he resides happily, the donor obtains the best of worlds. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! If a person donates a shelter for cows that is strong and is capable of withstanding cold and rain, then the donor saves seven generations of his lineage.[43] O son! By donating arable land, one obtains prosperous worlds. By donating land that is rich in wealth, one extends one’s family and lineage. One should never donate land that is barren or scorched. Nor should one donate land that is near a cremation ground or is populated by wicked people. If a person performs a funeral ceremony for the ancestors in land that is owned by someone else, then the gift of that land and the fruits of the ceremony are both destroyed. Therefore, a learned person will purchase a plot of land and then donate it, even if it is small. The funeral cakes offered to the ancestors then become inexhaustible. Forests, mountains, rivers and *tirthas* are not owned by anyone. Therefore, ceremonies can be performed there. O lord of the earth! I have spoken to you about the fruits from donating land.

‘“O unblemished one! I will next tell you about the donation of cattle. Cows are superior to all ascetics. That is the reason the god Maheshvara performed austerities in their company. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Together with Soma, they dwell in Brahma’s world. That is the supreme destination that successful brahmana rishis seek. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They provide milk, clarified butter, curds, dung, hides, bones, horns and hair. They tolerate cold and heat and always work. They tolerate the difficult hardships of the monsoon season. With brahmanas, they go to the supreme destination. That is why the learned say that cows and brahmanas are equal. In ancient times, Rantideva performed a sacrifice where animals were slaughtered. It is because of the hides of cattle that the river formed came to be known as Charmanvati.[44] O lord of the earth! However, animals are no longer slaughtered and are thought of as gifts. O king! A person who donates them to

the best of brahmanas is saved from calamities, hardships and difficulties. A person who donates one thousand cows does not have to see hell after death. O lord of men! Such a person obtains victory everywhere. The lord of the thirty gods has spoken of the milk of cows as amrita. Therefore, a person who donates a cow, donates amrita. Those who are knowledgable about the Vedas say that ghee obtained from such milk is the best oblation offered to a fire. Therefore, a person who donates a cow, donates oblations. A bull is like the direct manifestation of heaven. A person who donates it to a brahmana who possesses the qualities obtains greatness in heaven. O bull among the Bharata lineage! A cow is said to be the breath of life among creatures. Therefore, a person who donates a cow, donates the breath of life. Those who are knowledgable about the Vedas have said that a cow is the refuge of creatures. Therefore, a person who donates a cow, donates refuge. A cow must not be donated for slaughter, to someone who kills animals, or to a non-believer. O bull among men! A cow must not be given to someone who earns a living from cattle. Learned ones have said that if a man gives a cow to such perpetrators of wicked deeds, he goes to ever-lasting hell. A cow that is given to a brahmana should not be lean, barren, diseased, defective in limb, exhausted, or one that does not easily calve. A man who properly donates ten thousand cattle enjoys delight with Shakra. A man who donates one hundred thousand cattle obtains the eternal worlds. I have talked about donating cows, donating sesamum and donating land.

‘“O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Now hear about gifts of food. O Kounteya! The donation of food is said to be the best. After donating food, Rantideva went to heaven. O lord of the earth! O lord of men! If a person gives food to someone who is exhausted and hungry, the immensely fortunate one sees Svayambhu’s world. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O lord! By donating gold, garments and horses, a man doesn’t obtain the benefit that can be obtained by donating food. Food is the supreme object. It has been held that food is supreme prosperity. Life, power, energy, valour and strength result from food. If a man always donates food single-mindedly, then he does not suffer from any hardship. Parashara said that. O king! After worshipping the gods in the proper way, food must be offered to them. A man offers the gods the food that he himself partakes. If a man donates food in the *shuklapaksha* of Koumudi,[45] then he can tide over all hardships. After death, he obtains the infinite. O bull among the Bharata lineage! If a person is controlled and offers food to a hungry guest, he obtains the worlds that are meant for those who know about the brahman. A man who donates food manages to cross over every difficulty and hardship. He overcomes his sins and cleanses all his wicked deeds. I have thus spoken about the fruits from donation of food, donation of sesamum, donation of land and donation of cattle.”’

## Chapter 1747(66)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O father! You have recounted the fruits of donations and I have heard. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Food has specially been praised. What are the great and supreme fruits obtained from donating drinks? O grandfather! I wish to hear about this in detail.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O bull among Bharatas! I will accurately tell you about this. O one with truth as his valour! I will tell you about this now. Listen. O unblemished one! I will tell you everything about

gifts of drinks. I think that the benefit that a man obtains from donating food and drinks is supreme and there is no other gift that is equal to these. O son! In every way, life is upheld through food. Therefore, in this world, it is held to be the supreme donation. It is through food that the energy and strength of creatures are always increased. Therefore, Prajapati has said that the donation of food is supreme. O Kounteya! Savitri's auspicious words about this have also been heard. O immensely intelligent one! They were uttered on the occasion of a sacrifice of the gods. 'If a man donates food, he donates life. There is no gift in this world that is superior to granting life.'[46] O mighty-armed one! You have also heard Lomasha's words, spoken in earlier times, when Shibi granted life to the pigeon.[47] O lord of the earth! If a person donates food to a brahmana, he grants life and obtains a superior end. That is what we have heard. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! Drinks are superior to food. Without water, nothing can exist. The illustrious Soma, the lord of the large number of planets, was created from water. O great king! Amrita, *sudha*,[48] *svaha*, *vashat*, food, herbs and medicinal plants have originated from water. O lord of the earth! The breath of life of creatures results from this. Amrita is food for the gods and sudha is food for the serpents. Svadha is said to be food for the ancestors and plants and herbs are food for animals. The learned have said that food is the breath of life for humans. O tiger among men! All of these have resulted from drink. Therefore, there is nothing superior to a gift of drink. A man who desires his own prosperity must always gift it. O lord of the earth! A gift of drink ensures praise, fame and long life. O Kounteya! One who gives water is always established above his enemies. He obtains all the objects of desire and eternal fame. He is freed from sins. After death, he obtains the infinite. O tiger among men! O immensely radiant one! A person who gifts water goes to heaven. He obtains the indestructible and eternal worlds. This is what Manu has said."'

## Chapter 1748(67)

'Yudhishthira said, "Tell me again about gifts of sesamum, lamps, food and garments."

'Bhishma replied, "O Yudhishthira! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between a brahmana and Yama. In the middle region, in the land between the Ganga and the Yamuna, there was a large village of brahmanas, at the foot of the mountains known as Yamuna.[49] O lord of men! That beautiful village was known as Parnashala. Many learned brahmanas resided there. One day, Yama instructed a man.[50] He was attired in black garments. His eyes were red and his body hair stood erect. His feet, eyes and nose were like that of a crow. 'Go to the village of brahmanas. Having gone there, bring the one who is named Sharmina. He belongs to Agastya's lineage. He is learned and self-controlled. He is a revered and well-known preceptor. Do not bring anyone else, even if that person lives near him and is from the same gotra. That other person is his equal in qualities, studying and birth. He is also the intelligent one's[51] equal in offspring and conduct. Bring the one I have spoken about. It is my duty to honour him.' Having gone there on Yama's instructions, he did the opposite of what he had been asked to. Though restrained by Yama, he attacked and brought the other one. At this, Yama arose and worshipped the valiant one. He said, 'Take this one away and bring the other one instead.' When Dharmaraja[52] spoke these words, the brahmana replied

to Dharmaraja. ‘I am tired of studying. O undecaying one! Whatever be the time that is left for me, I wish to dwell here with you.’[53] Yama said, ‘I cannot accept anyone until his ordained time has come. I only know about the acts of dharma that people have performed.[54] O brahmana! O immensely radiant one! Return to your own house. Tell me if there is anything else that I can do for you.’ The brahmana replied, ‘Tell me about extremely great and beneficial acts. O excellent one! You are the yardstick for everything in the three worlds.’

‘“Yama said, ‘O brahmana rishi! Listen to the excellent ordinances that have been laid down for donations. Sesamum is a supreme gift and leads to eternal merits. O bull among brahmanas! Depending on capacity, one must always donate sesamum. If one donates sesamum every day, one obtains all the objects of desire. A funeral ceremony with sesamum is praised and it is the supreme gift. Following the ordinances laid down for rites, give it to brahmanas. Whenever sesamum is obtained, sesamum must always be eaten. If a virtuous person desires prosperity, he must always do this in his house, with all his soul.[55] There is no doubt that drinks also figure among all gifts. Lakes, ponds and wells must be constructed. O supreme among brahmanas! Such tasks are extremely rare in the world. Water must always be given, since it brings supreme merits. O supreme among brahmanas! For the sake of drinking water, reservoirs must always be constructed. In particular, after a person has eaten, water must be offered.”’

‘Bhishma continued, “Having been instructed, Yama’s messenger then took him back to his residence. Once he[56] had been taken there, he followed all of Yama’s instructions. Having taken him there, Yama’s messenger seized Sharmina and went and conveyed him to Dharmaraja. Dharmaraja, who knew about dharma, worshipped the powerful one. Having conversed with him, Yama also instructed him about everything and said that he should be taken back to where he had been brought from. Having returned, he also did everything that Yama had asked him to. For the benefit of the ancestors, Yama praised the donation of lamps. Therefore, to enable the ancestors to cross over, lamps must always be given. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! One must always give lamps. O lord! These have been held to constitute eyes for the gods and the ancestors. O lord of men! It has been said that the donation of jewels brings extremely great merits. If a brahmana receives these, and then sells them for undertaking a sacrifice, he doesn’t do anything terrible. Having received these, if a brahmana donates them to other brahmanas, both the donor and the recipient obtain inexhaustible benefits. Manu knew about dharma and said that as long as the donor and the recipient follow the appropriate rites, both of them obtain eternal dharma. A man who is devoted to his own wife must always give garments. He will then obtain excellent garments and excellent attire. O tiger among men! These are the proofs enunciated and described in the Vedas about the many benefits from donating cattle, gold and sesamum. One must marry and generate offspring. O Kouravya! The obtaining of a son is superior to all kinds of gains.”’

## Chapter 1749(68)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O foremost among the Kuru lineage! Tell me again about the supreme ordinances associated with donations. O immensely fortunate one! Especially tell me about gifts

of land. Through his own deeds,[57] a kshatriya must donate the earth to brahmanas and they must receive it, following the rites. No one else[58] should donate it. Desiring the fruits, all the varnas must donate according to their capacities. The Vedas have enumerated this and you should explain it to me."

'Bhishma replied, "There are three gifts that have the same name and lead to the same kind of fruits. They lead to all the fruits of desire being met and they are a cow, the earth and Sarasvati. A person who tells his disciple about the dharma of Brahmi Sarasvati obtains fruits that are equal to those obtained from donating the earth and cows.[59] Cows are also praised in that way and there is no gift that is superior. O Yudhishthira! From their donation, one can also reap the best fruits. Cattle are the mothers of all creatures and yield all kinds of happiness. A person who desires his prosperity must always give cows as dakshina. They are the auspicious abodes of divinity and must always be worshipped. Earlier, when gods used cattle to till the land, they goaded them. Therefore, it is permissible to goad them in such a task, but never for anything else. When cows are grazing, drinking water or lying down, they must not be disturbed. When they are thirsty, even by looking at a man, they are capable of killing him and his relatives. The seats of the ancestors and the seats of the gods are purified with cow dung. What can be more pure than them? Before he himself eats, if a person gives someone else's cow a handful of grass daily, for an entire year, that is like performing a vow that satisfies all the objects of desire. He obtains sons, fame, riches and prosperity. Everything inauspicious is destroyed and his nightmares melt away."

'Yudhishthira asked, "What are the signs of cattle that can be given and which are the ones to be avoided? Who is a good recipient and who are the ones to whom one shouldn't give?"

'Bhishma replied, "A cow must never be given to a person who is wicked in conduct, sinful, greedy, untruthful in speech and one who does not render offerings to the ancestors and the gods. If a person gives ten cows to a learned brahmana who seeks alms, has many sons and makes offerings to the fire, the donor obtains supreme worlds. If a person performs acts of dharma with possessions he has obtained from someone else, then both the actor and the original owner get a share of the auspicious merits. A person who is the biological father, a person who saves from great fear and a person who provides means of subsistence—these are the three types of fathers. Sins are destroyed by serving a preceptor. Insolence destroys great fame. If one has three sons, then one is no longer a person without a son.[60] Ten cows ensure a means of subsistence. Means of sustenance must be created for a brahmana who is devoted to Vedanta, is extremely learned, is content in his wisdom, has conquered his senses, is virtuous and self-controlled, is pleasant in speech towards all beings, is one who will not perform a perverse deed out of a minor fear, is mild and generous, is always attentive towards guests, has sons and wives and is equal in conduct.[61] The merits obtained from giving a cow to a recipient who possesses the qualities are equal to the demerits substracted if one seizes a brahmana's possessions. In every situation, one must avoid taking away a brahmana's possessions and one must maintain a distance from his wives."'

## Chapter 1750(69)

‘Bhishma said, “O extender of the Kuru lineage! In this connection, there is the recital of the extremely difficult hardship Nriga had to face when he took away the possession of a virtuous brahmana. O Partha! On an earlier occasion, it has been heard that some people entered the city of Dvaravati and saw a giant well that was covered with grass and creepers. They made efforts, seeking to obtain water from the well. Since the water was extensively covered, they had to struggle a lot. After clearing this, they saw a giant lizard there. They made thousands of attempts to remove it from that place. It was as large as a mountain and they used ropes made of leather to bind and drag it away. However, not succeeding in these attempts, they went to Janardana. ‘There is a giant lizard that has completely covered the mouth of the well. We have been unable to remove it.’ They reported this to Krishna.

‘“Vasudeva removed it from there and wished to know who it actually was. Thus asked, it reported itself to be King Nriga, who, in earlier times, had performed one thousand sacrifices. When it answered in this way, Madhava said, ‘You performed auspicious deeds, not wicked ones. Why did you then face this hardship? O Indra among kings! Tell me. How did you attain this state? We have heard that in ancient times, you repeatedly gave brahmanas hundreds of thousands of cows one hundred times. Then you again gave hundred and eight thousand of cows a hundred thousand times. Why did this happen to you?’ Nriga told Krishna, ‘There was a brahmana who practised agnihotra. While he was away, it was led astray and mixed with my herd of cows. That animal got included in thousands of cattle I possessed. Desiring prosperity after death, I gave it away to a brahmana. The brahmana returned and saw that his wayward cow was in another brahmana’s house. He said, “This belongs to me.” They disputed the matter and, extremely anxious, appeared before me. Both of them spoke to me. One said, “You gave me this.” The other said, “You stole this from me.” I told the one I had given the cow to, “In exchange for this cow, accept these hundreds and hundreds of cows.” However, he replied, “The one I got is appropriate for the time and the place. She yields a lot of milk. She is quiet and affectionate. Her milk is sweet. She has always been praised in my house. I have a weak son who has just been weaned and this cow has nourished him. I am incapable of giving her away.” Having said this, he left. So I spoke to the other brahmana and proposed an exchange. “Instead of this cow, accept these hundred thousand other cows.” But the brahmana replied, “I am established on my own path and am incapable of accepting gifts from kings. Therefore, swiftly return the cow that is mine.” O Madhusudana! I offered him gold, horses, silver and chariots. However, the bull among brahmanas did not accept these. Meanwhile, urged by the dharma of time, I obtained the world of the ancestors[62] and was brought before Dharmaraja. Yama worshipped me and spoke these words. “O king! There is no end to the number of auspicious deeds you have performed. But there is a sin, even if you committed it inadvertently. Do you wish to suffer for the sin earlier or later? It shall be as you wish. You promised that you would protect. You took a false pledge. You seized the possession of a brahmana. These are the three aspects to the sin you committed.” I replied, “O lord! I shall suffer from the sin first. Let the auspicious benefits come later.” As soon as I said this to Dharmaraja, I fell down on the surface of the earth and could hear the words that Yama spoke to me. O Janardana! He said, “Vasudeva will save you. When one thousand years are over, the fruits of your evil deed will wear thin. Because of the other deeds that you have yourself performed, you will then conquer and obtain the eternal worlds.” I fell down, head downwards, and found myself inside this well. Though I

was born as an inferior species, my memory did not desert me. You have saved me today. This can be nothing other than the strength of your austerities. O Krishna! Grant me permission. I wish to go to heaven now.' O scorcher of enemies! He took Krishna's permission. He bowed down to Janardana and ascending a celestial vehicle, went to heaven. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! O descendant of the Kuru lineage! After Nriga reached heaven, Vasudeva recited this shloka. 'No man should willingly seize something that belongs to a brahmana. If seized, a brahmana's property causes destruction, just as the brahmana's cow destroyed Nriga.' O Partha! A meeting with the virtuous is never fruitless. Behold Nriga's encounter with a virtuous person. He was freed from hell. There are fruits from donations. There are also evil fruits from violence. O Yudhishthira! Therefore, you should avoid acts of injury towards cows."'

## Chapter 1751(70)

"Yudhishthira said, "O unblemished one! O mighty-armed one! Tell me in detail about the fruits that can be obtained from donating cattle. I am not satisfied with what you have said."

'Bhishma replied, "In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about the words the rishi Uddalaki and Nachiketa spoke to each other. Having initiated himself for a rite, the rishi Uddalaki told his son, Nachiketa, 'Serve me.' When those rituals were completed, the maharshi again told his son, 'I have been engaged with my ablutions and have focused on studying. Since my mind was on those, I have forgotten to bring the firewood, the *darbha* grass and the pot full of water that I had collected. They are on the banks of the river. Go and bring them.' However, having gone there, he saw that all these had been washed away by the force of the river's current. The sage went and told his father, 'I did not see them there.' At that time, the sage Uddalaki was overcome by hunger, thirst and exhaustion. The immensely ascetic one cursed his son, 'You will see Yama.' Struck by the *vajra* of his father's words, he joined his hands in salutation and asked for pacification. However, he lost his life and fell down on the ground. His father saw that Nachiketa had fallen down and became senseless with grief. He exclaimed, 'What have I done?' He also fell down on the ground. He was overcome with supreme grief at his son having been killed through his own acts. The day passed and the terrible night arrived. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Nachiketa lay down on a mat of kusha grass. As his father's tears fell on him, he began to move, like crops reviving when they are showered with rain. His body was smeared with divine fragrances and he was still weak, as if he had woken up from sleep. His father praised this phenomenon of his son reviving and asked, 'O son! Have you conquered the worlds through your auspicious deeds? It is good fortune that I have got you back. Your body isn't human any longer.' The great-souled one had directly witnessed everything and was thus asked by his father.

'"In the midst of the maharshis, he clearly told his father what had happened. 'Following your instructions, I quickly went to Vaivasvata's abode. It was large, beautiful and resplendent. I saw a multi-storeyed assembly hall that was golden and one thousand *yojanas*[63] wide. As soon as he saw me advance towards him, Vaivasvata instructed that a house and a seat should be given to me. He offered *arghya* [64] and the other signs of welcome. For your sake, he honoured me. I was thus surrounded and

honoured by his attendants. I gently spoke these words. “O Dharmaraja! I have come to your dominion. Grant me the worlds that have been earmarked for me.” Yama told me, “O amiable one! You are not dead. Your ascetic father told you to see Yama. He is like a blazing fire in his energy. O brahmana! I am incapable of rendering his words false. O son![65] I have seen you now. Return. The one who created your body is sorrowing. What can I give you? What does your mind desire? You are my beloved guest. I will grant the boon you desire.” Thus addressed, I replied, “I have obtained your dominion and it is extremely difficult to return from here. If you think that I am deserving of a boon, I wish to see the prosperous worlds meant for those who perform auspicious deeds.” The god asked me to ascend a vehicle. It was yoked to horses and was extremely radiant, like the sun. O Indra among brahmanas! He showed me all the worlds meant for the performers of auspicious deeds. There, I saw the dazzling residences meant for those who have cleansed their souls. They had different foundations and forms. They were full of many kinds of jewels. They sparkled like the lunar disc. They were decorated with nets of bells. There were hundreds that had many floors and there were lakes and groves inside them. They dazzled like lapis lazuli and were decorated with silver and gold. Everything there, mobile and immobile, possessed the complexion of the rising sun. There were mountains of objects to eat and swallow. There were garments and beds. In those residences, there were trees that granted all the objects of desire. Everywhere, there were rivers, roads, assembly halls, lakes and tanks. Thousands of vehicles were yoked and they thundered. There were rivers that flowed with milk. There were mountains of ghee. The water sparkled. With Vaivasvata’s permission, I saw many such countries that I had never seen before. Having seen all this, I addressed the ancient and powerful Dharmaraja. “These rivers have eternal flows of milk and ghee. Whose food have these been decreed as?” Yama replied, “Know that these objects of food are for the virtuous ones who donate milk. There are other eternal and pervasive worlds, bereft of all misery, for the virtuous ones who are devoted to donating cows. The gifting of cows alone is not praised. There are ordinances about the time and the recipient. O brahmana! One should give after knowing these. Know that if a cow is kept inside a place where it suffers from the fire or the sun, this leads to hardship.[66] If a brahmana is firm in studying, is extremely ascetic and is devoted to sacrifices, he is a worthy recipient. Cows which have been rescued from a situation of distress and have thereafter been nourished, are especially praised. One should fast for three nights and sleep on the ground. After that, contented, one should give cows away. Cows should cheerfully be given away, with their calves, with all the other accompaniments. They should be ones that yield good calves. Having given them, for three days, the donor should only subsist on the milk of cows. One must donate a cow after following good vows. A brass vessel must be given for milking. It should be one that has easy birth and should also be one that does not run away. In that event, the donor enjoys the world of heaven for as many years as there are hair on the cow’s body. A bull must be controllable and capable of bearing a burden. It must be strong and young. It must be large, brave and of noble birth. A donor who gives to a brahmana in this way, enjoys the worlds, like the donor of a cow. A forgiving and grateful person who has no means of subsistence and depends on cows for a living is said to be a worthy recipient. The donation of a cow is praised when there is fear about means of subsistence, for some great purpose, for the sake of agriculture, or for the sake of a sacrifice. The gift of a beloved cow is especially praised when it is for the preceptor or when it is for the sake of nurturing a child. The time

and the place are important. Cows that are given should have been born internally,[67] purchased, obtained as a price for learning, obtained in exchange for other animals, conquered[68] or obtained in marriage." Hearing Vaivasvata's words, I spoke to him again. "If people do not own cattle, how can they go to worlds that are meant for the donors of cattle?" At this, the intelligent Yama replied, "By donating cattle, one goes to the supreme destination. In the absence of cattle, one can go to the regions where donors of cattle go, by giving what is regarded as equivalent to cows. In the absence of cows, one can carefully observe vows and create a cow made out of ghee. That flow of ghee is like a milk-yielding cow with a calf. In the absence of ghee, one can carefully observe vows and donate sesamum. Like a cow, that will save from all kinds of hardship and one will find delight, as with a river of milk. In the absence of sesamum, one can carefully observe vows and donate water. That will be like a flowing river of cool water and will satisfy all the objects of desire." These were the instructions that Dharmaraja gave me then. O undecaying one! On seeing all this, I was filled with supreme delight. I will now report something that you will find agreeable. There is a great sacrifice that only requires a little bit of wealth. O father! It has been obtained by me and it will flow from me. It can also be observed by those who follow the ordinances of the Vedas. The curse that you imposed on me was actually a favour. Through that, I was able to see Yama. I witnessed the great gains that can be reaped through donations. Without any doubt, I will practise dana dharma. O brahmana rishi! This is what Dharmaraja repeatedly told me, cheerfully. "O son! A person who always donates, should specially gift cows. Be pure in pursuing this artha and do not ignore your own dharma. Depending on the time and the place, donate to a worthy recipient. Therefore, always donate cows. You should not entertain any doubts about this. In ancient times, there were those who were tranquil in their souls. They remained on the path of donations and always gave gifts. They were scared of engaging in terrible austerities. Hence, to the best of their capacities, they practised donations. In due course of time, they abandoned all malice. They purified their souls. They were faithful and good in conduct. Those performers of auspicious deeds tormented themselves through donations and obtained blazing worlds in the vault of heaven. Lawfully obtained objects must be given to brahmanas, after examining whether the recipient is worthy. They should be given on *kamyashtami*.[69] After donating, for ten days, one should subsist on cow's milk, cow dung and cow's urine. The donor of a bull follows the vows of the Vedas. The donor of a couple of bulls becomes skilled in knowledge of the Vedas. By giving a vehicle yoked to cattle, one obtains the merit of bathing in tirthas. By giving a kapila cow, one is cleansed of all sins. If the owner of a kapila obtained through legitimate means gives it away, he is purified of all sins. There is nothing that is superior to the milk of cows. It is said that greatness is obtained from donating cows. Through their milk, cows hold up the world. Cows produce the food that sustains the worlds. Knowing about what cattle do, if a person oppresses them, he is evil in his consciousness and goes to hell. If a person donates one thousand cows, one hundred, fifty or even ten, or even if one gives a single cow that properly gives birth to calves, to a virtuous brahmana, that cow becomes like a river that is full of sacred tirthas, yielding benefits. In prosperity, nourishment and protecting the worlds, cows are like the rays of the sun that descend on earth. The word is the same for both.[70] The donor of a cow enjoys extensive offspring. Therefore, a cow shines like the sun. In donating cows, for a disciple, the preceptor is the best recipient. He is the eloquent and controlled speaker who grants heaven. The knowledge of the ordinances is extremely great dharma. This is the

first ordinance and all other ordinances result from this.[71] Thus, legitimately earned objects must be given to brahmanas, after ascertaining the worthiness of the recipient. When praising, the immortals, men and we say, 'May the auspiciousness of your deeds extend.'" O maharshi! This is what Dharmaraja told me. I bowed my head down before the one who has dharma in his soul. O illustrious one! Having taken Vaivasvata's permission, I have returned here, at your feet.'"'

## Chapter 1752(71)

'Yudhishthira said, "O lord! When speaking about the rishi Nachiketa, you have told me about the greatness of donating cows and you have also instructed me about cattle. O grandfather! O immensely intelligent one! You have also told me about the hardship that the great-souled Nriga faced because of a single transgression. He had to dwell in Dvaravati for a long time. I have learnt how Krishna became the cause of his liberation. O lord! However, I still have a doubt about the world of cows. I wish to hear the truth about what is obtained by those who donate cows."

'Bhishma replied, "In this connection, there is an ancient history about what the god Shatakratu asked the one who was born from the lotus.

'"'Shakra said, 'I have a doubt about the prosperity seen by those who reside in Goloka[72] and it transcending that experienced by the residents of the world of heaven. O illustrious one! O unblemished one! What is the world of cows like? Tell me. I desire to know about where the donors of cows go and reside. What fruits do they obtain? What are the supreme qualities there? How do men go there, freed from anxiety? For how long does a donor of cows enjoy those fruits? Do they donate a lot, or do they donate a little? What is it for those who donate a lot? What is it for those who donate a little? How do those who donate none become like those who donate cows? Tell me. O lord! How do those who donate a lot become equal to those who donate a little? O lord! How do those who donate a little become like those who donate a lot? When cattle are given, what kind of dakshina is superior? O illustrious one! You should tell me the truth about this.'"'

## Chapter 1753(72)

'"Brahma said, 'O Shatakratu! You have asked me questions about the superiority of donating cows and there is no one else in the world who could have asked them. O Shakra! There are many kinds of worlds that you cannot see. I can see those worlds and so can women who have only one husband. Rishis who are excellent in their vows and extremely auspicious in their deeds go there, in their own bodies, and so do brahmanas who are virtuous in their conduct. Those who are excellent in their vows obtain emancipation and free themselves from their bodies.[73] With clear minds, they see those worlds in this world itself, as if in dreams. O one with the thousand eyes! Listen to the qualities that those worlds possess. There is no passage of time there. There is no old age. Nor is there sin. There is nothing that is inauspicious there. There is no disease or exhaustion. O Vasava! The cattle

that dwell there obtain everything through their mental powers. I have directly seen this. They can go wherever they want. They roam around, wherever they wish. They enjoy one object of desire after another object of desire. Lakes, ponds, rivers, many kinds of groves, houses, mountains and all the objects that are agreeable to all beings—all these are seen there. Know that there is no world that is superior to this world. O Shakra! The best of men who tolerate everything, are forgiving and affectionate, follow their preceptors and are devoid of ego, go there. A man who does not eat any kind of flesh, is always self-controlled, worships his mother and his father, is truthful, cheerfully serves brahmanas, does not exhibit anger towards cows or brahmanas, is devoted to dharma, serves his preceptors, is devoted to the truth for as long as he lives, is engaged in donations, is forgiving towards crimes, is mild and self-controlled, is devoted to gods and is compassionate towards all guests is a man who possesses the qualities to go to that eternal and undecaying world. A person who has intercourse with someone else's wife cannot see this world. Nor can a person who kills his preceptor, engages in futile boasting, or always engages in censuring peaceful brahmanas who are devoted to the Vedas. Evil-souled ones who possess other wickedness cannot go there either. Goloka is the residence of those who are the performers of auspicious deeds. Those who injure their friends, are ungrateful, deceitful, crooked, haters of dharma and slayers of brahmanas cannot see it, not even in their minds. O lord of the gods! I have thus skilfully told you everything.

'"'O Shatakratu! Now listen to the fruits obtained by those who gift cows. A person who donates a cow bought with the riches obtained through inheritance or bought with wealth that has been earned through dharma obtains worlds without decay. O Shakra! If a person buys a cow with riches won through gambling and then donates it, he enjoys the fruits for ten thousand divine years. If a person obtains a cow through inheritance, that is regarded as having obtained a cow lawfully. Such a gift can be received and the donor certainly obtains the undecaying worlds. O Shachi's lord! If a person receives a cow as a gift and then gives it away with an extremely pure heart, know that it is certain that he will obtain the eternal worlds. If a person speaks the truth from the moment of his birth, controls his senses, is forgiving and tolerates his preceptors and brahmanas, he goes to the destination meant for cows. O Shachi's lord! Words that should not be spoken should not be uttered towards a brahmana. One must not harm a cow, even mentally. One must follow the conduct of a cow.[74] One must be compassionate towards cows. O Shakra! Listen to the fruits obtained by those who are devoted to the truth. If he gives away a single cow, that is like giving away one thousand cows. Listen to the fruits obtained by kshatriyas who possess such qualities. If he gives away a single cow, it has been determined that this is like giving away one hundred cows. If a vaishya possesses such qualities, it will be like giving away fifty cows. For a humble shudra, the fruits are said to be one-fourth. There may be a person who is devoted to rites, devoted to the truth, engaged in service to the preceptor, self-controlled, forgiving, tranquil, pure in intelligence and devoted to dharma. He may worship gods and be free of egoism. If he follows the ordinances and gives a milk-yielding cow to a brahmana, he obtains great fruits. Always single-minded in devotion, one must always give, established in the truth and engaged in serving the preceptor. O Shakra! Listen to the fruits obtained by a person who studies the Vedas, is respectful towards cows, is always delighted at seeing cows and who, since birth, has bowed down before cows. He is said to obtain great fruits equal to those obtained by the perfomer of a royal sacrifice, or a sacrifice where a lot of gold is given. All the virtuous and successful rishis

have said this. If a person practises great reverence, is truthful in speech, is tranquil and wise and always follows a vow towards cows, in the sense of giving cows something for an entire year, then he is auspicious in conduct and obtains fruits equal to those from donating one thousand cows. If a person eats only once a day and follows a vow towards cows, giving the remainder of the food to cows and showing compassion towards cows, he obtains the infinite for ten years. O Shatakratu! If a person devoutly gives away a single cow that has been bought, it is said that he obtains the fruits for many days, as if he had given away one hundred cows. These are the fruits obtained by a brahmana. Listen to what is said about the fruits obtained by a kshatriya. The fruits obtained by a kshatriya are said to last for five years.[75] It is said to be half that for a vaishya and a shudra's is half that for a vaishya. If one sells one's own person, buys a cow with this and then gives it away, it is said that the duration of the fruits enjoyed can be ascertained by touching the cow. O immensely fortunate one! It is said that there are as many eternal and indestructible worlds as there are hair on the cow's body. O Koushika![76] Know that if a cow is conquered in battle and then given away, the fruits are as eternal as those from selling one's own self. In the absence of a cow, if one is careful in vows and gives away a cow made out of sesamum, one can tide over all hardships. That cow's milk is like a river of bliss. The mere gift of a cow is not praised. The ordinances must be observed and the time and the place are important. One must donate a cow only at the right time and after ascertaining the nature of the brahmana. The cow must not suffer from fire and the sun in the recipient's residence. A person who is firm in studying, is pure of lineage, calm, is devoted to sacrifices, scared of sin, grateful, forgiving, is not too fierce, one whose subsistence has suffered and a person who will provide a refuge to cows is said to be a worthy recipient. The time and the place are particularly superior for donating a cow when the recipient is excessively suffering because of the lack of a means of subsistence, when the cow is meant for agriculture, a sacrifice, a pregnant mother, for the sake of a preceptor or for rearing a child. If one knows about a cow's nature, if it has been obtained in exchange for knowledge, if it has been conquered through weapons, if it has been born in one's own house, if it has been saved from a distressful situation and if it has to be given because it can no longer be maintained—such cows are praised as gifts. Cattle that are strong, good in disposition and fragrant are always praised as gifts. Ganga is the best among rivers. Like that, a kapila is the best among cattle. For three nights, one must only subsist on water. One must sleep on the bare ground. After satisfying with other gifts, one must then give a cow. Healthy calves that have not been weaned must be given away with the cow. After giving the cow away, for three days, one must only subsist on milk. One must donate cows of a good disposition, ones that yield excellent calves. They must behave well and must not run away. If one gives away such a cow, in the world hereafter, one enjoys happiness for as many years as the cow possesses hair. For a brahmana, one must give a strong, young and truculent bull that is capable of bearing a burden. It must be great in courage and must be capable of carrying the plough. One then obtains worlds obtained by those who donate ten cows. O Koushika! If a person saves a brahmana or a cow from a desolate state, because of that act of conferring safety, he is freed. Listen to the good merits. Such a man obtains eternal fruits equal to a horse sacrifice. O one with the one thousand eyes! At the time of death, he obtains whatever status he desires.[77] He obtains many kinds of divine worlds and everything else that is there in his heart. Through that deed, the man obtains all these. With the permission of cattle, he obtains greatness everywhere. There may be a person who follows the

ordinances and follows cows into the forest, surviving on grass, cow dung and leaves, free from desire, self-controlled and pure. O Shatakratu! Free from desire, he resides happily in my world with the gods, or in whatever other world he wishes for.’”’

## Chapter 1754(73)

‘“Indra said, ‘I wish to know about the ends obtained by a person who steals a cow, or one who sells a cow because of the money.’

‘“Brahma replied, ‘Listen to the fruits obtained by a person who steals a cow to eat it, sell it, or gift it to a brahmana. Without following the restraints, if a man sells, causes injury and eats, or causes it to be slain, he does not do what is permissible. For as many years as there are hair, the slayer, the eater and the perpetrator of heinous deeds is submerged.[78] O lord! The sins from stealing and selling are said to be equal to the sins from destroying the sacrifices of brahmanas. If a person steals a cow and gives it to a brahmana, there are fruits from the act of donation, but he also has to suffer in hell. O immensely radiant one! When a cow is donated, gold has been said to be the dakshina. There is no doubt that gold is supreme for purposes of dakshina. By donating a cow, seven of the preceding and succeeding generations are saved. The gains are said to double if gold is given as dakshina. Gold is a supreme gift. Gold is a supreme dakshina. O Shakra! Gold purifies. Gold is said to be the supreme purifier. O Shatakratu! Pure gold is said to purify the lineage. O immensely radiant one! I have briefly told you about dakshina.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “O bull among the Bharata lineage! This is what the grandfather[79] told Indra. Indra told Dasharatha and Rama learnt it from his father. Raghava told the illustrious Lakshmana, his beloved brother. O lord! While dwelling in the forest, Lakshmana told the rishis. Progressively, the rishis, rigid in their vows, sustained this, though it was difficult to sustain. And so did the kings who were devoted to dharma. O Yudhishthira! My preceptor told me about this. A brahmana who recites this at an assembly of brahmanas, or at a place where sacrifices and donations of cows are both being held, indeed obtains the undecaying worlds and is always with the gods. This is what the illustrious Brahma, the supreme lord, said.”’

## Chapter 1755(74)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O lord! I am reassured by what you have spoken about dharma. O grandfather! But I will relate the doubts that I have. Tell me about these. O immensely radiant one! What are said to be the fruits of vows and what is their nature? What are the fruits of rituals?[80] What are the fruits of studying on one’s own? What are the fruits of self-restraint and of sustaining the Vedas? What are the fruits of teaching? I wish to know about all these. O grandfather! In this world, what are the fruits of not accepting gifts? What are heard and seen to be the fruits for those who give? What are the fruits obtained by brave ones who are engaged in their own acts? What are

said to be the fruits of truth? What are the fruits of *brahmacharya*?. What happens as a result of serving the father or serving the mother? What about serving the instructor or the preceptor? What about lack of anger and compassion? O grandfather! O one who knows about dharma! I desire to know the truth about all this, in detail. My curiosity is great."

'Bhishma replied, "A person who follows the instructions, commences a vow and completes it properly, obtains the eternal worlds. O king! The fruits of rituals are directly seen. You have obtained the fruits of rituals and sacrifices. The fruits of studying on one's own are seen in this world and in the world hereafter. There is artha in this world and eternal bliss in Brahma's world. O king! Listen in detail to the fruits of self-restraint. A self-restrained person is happy everywhere. A self-restrained person is detached everywhere. Self-restrained people can go wherever they wish and can destroy all their enemies. There is no doubt that self-restrained people obtain what they desire. O Pandava! Those who are self-restrained obtain all the objects of desire everywhere. Because of their valour and austerities, they find bliss in heaven. There are many kinds of sacrifices with donations. A self-restrained and forgiving donor is not enraged. Therefore, self-restraint is superior to donations. If a person is enraged after the act of giving, his eternal worlds of giving are destroyed because of that rage. Therefore, self-restraint is superior to donations. O great king! There are tens of thousands of invisible abodes in heaven. The rishis are conveyed to all those worlds and the gods go there. O king! The supreme rishis go there because of their self-restraint. As they wish, they can go to those great places. Therefore, self-restraint is superior to donations. O lord of men! If an instructor follows the instructions and offers oblations into the fire, by virtue of his efforts, he obtains the fruits of Brahma's undecaying world. Having studied the Vedas, if a person legitimately passes on that knowledge, having praised the deeds of his preceptor, he obtains greatness in heaven. If a kshatriya is engaged in studying, performs sacrifices, gives donations and saves others in battle, he too obtains greatness in heaven. A vaishya who donates and is engaged in his own tasks obtains greatness. A shudra who serves and is engaged in his own tasks goes to heaven. Many kinds of valiant ones have been spoken of, and listen to what is earmarked for them. There are indicated destinations for brave ones and fruits for brave ones. There are those who are brave in sacrifices, brave in self-restraint and brave in truth. Men are said to be brave in battle and brave in donating. Others are brave in intelligence and still others are brave in forgiveness. There are men who are brave in uprightness, or brave in tranquility. There are many other virtuous ones who are brave in rituals. There are those who are brave in studying the Vedas and those who are brave in teaching. There are those who are brave in serving preceptors and brave in serving fathers. Others are brave in serving mothers, or brave in begging for alms. There are many who are brave in practice of *sankhya*. There are others who are brave in practice of yoga. There are those who are brave in the forest, in the household and in worshipping guests. Because of the fruits they have conquered through their own deeds, all of them go to the supreme worlds. Upholding all the Vedas or bathing in all the tirthas may, or may not, always be equal to speaking the truth. One thousand horse sacrifices and truth were weighed on both sides of a balance and truth was superior to one thousand horse sacrifices. The sun heats because of truth. The fire blazes because of truth. The wind blows because of truth. Everything is established in truth. The gods, the ancestors and brahmanas are delighted by the truth. Truth is said to be the supreme dharma. Therefore, truth must not be violated. The sages are devoted to the truth. The sages

possess truth for their valour. The sages pledge by the truth. Therefore, truth is superior. O bull among the Bharata lineage! A person who is devoted to the truth finds delight in the world of heaven. Self-restraint leads to the fruits of truth being obtained. Thus, with all my soul, I have spoken about it. There is no doubt that all those who are humble in soul obtain greatness in heaven. O lord of the earth! Hear from me about the qualities of brahmacharya. O lord of men! In this world, if a person practises brahmacharya from birth to death, know that there is nothing he cannot obtain. There are many crore of rishis who dwell in Brahma's world. They have always been devoted to the truth. They have been self-restrained and have held up their seed. O king! A person who follows brahmacharya destroys all sins. This is especially true of a brahmana. A brahmana is said to be like the fire. This fire is evident in an ascetic brahmana. If a brahmachari is enraged, even Shakra is terrified. Thus, the fruits of brahmacharya are seen in the rishis. Hear about the dharma that results from worshipping the mother and the father. O king! If a person serves the father without any malice, if he serves the mother, the preceptor or the instructor without any sense of ego, know that his fruits are a supreme state in the world of heaven. With a cleansed soul, if a person serves his preceptor, he doesn't have to see hell."'

## Chapter 1756(75)

'Yudhishthira said, "I wish to hear the truth about the supreme ordinances that govern gifts of cattle. It is through those that one obtains all the eternal worlds."

'Bhishma replied, "O lord of the earth! There is nothing that is superior to donating cows. If a lawfully obtained cow is gifted, the lineage is immediately saved. These[81] were properly developed for the virtuous, but became appropriately applied to all subjects. They have been followed from ancient times. O king! Hear about the ordinances for gifting cows. In ancient times, cows were brought before Mandhata and he had doubts about what should be done when the cows were donated. He asked Brihaspati, who replied. 'On the previous day, the donor should worship brahmanas and determine the appropriate time for making the gift, following the rituals. The cow should be of the Rohini type.[82] The cows to be given should be addressed as *samanga* and *bahula*.[83] Entering amidst the cows, the following words from the sacred texts should be recited. "The cow is my mother. The bull is my father. Let them give me heaven and prosperity and status on earth. I seek refuge in the cow." One should spend the night amidst the cows. Those words spoken by the sages must also be uttered when the cow is given away. The donor must spend the night with the cows, like a friend and following the vows they practise.[84] By reducing himself to their state, he instantly becomes cleansed of sins. When the sun rises, he must give away the cow, with a bull and a calf. When these three are given away, you will obtain benedictions and the objective of prosperity. "They[85] are the source of energy.[86] They are the energy of intelligence. They are the source of the immortality in sacrifices. The universe is established on them. They are the source of eternal prosperity on earth. They are spoken of as the source of all offspring. Let the cows drive all evil away. They have traits of Surya and Soma. Let them convey me to heaven. Like a mother, let them offer me refuge. Let them yield all the benedictions, even those that haven't been uttered. When I have completed this act of donation, let

my body be freed. Like Sarasvati, let them envelope me with benefits. You are always the conveyors of auspicious deeds. I have sought refuge with you. Determine a desirable end for me. It is because of you that I am what I am today. By giving you away, I am giving myself away. From my mind, I have let you go. Through my mind, I have sought refuge in you. You are the one who ignites the peaceful form of Soma and the fierce form of Surya." In this way, following the ordinances, the donor of the cow must utter the first part of the verse that has been indicated. When he has spoken, the brahmana who knows about the rituals concerning the donation of cows must receive and utter the second part of the verse.[87]

'"'Instead of a cow, if a donor gives away an equivalent amount of garments and riches, he is regarded as the donor of a cow. The giver of garments and gold will ensure subsistence through these.[88] The names and number of what is being given must be enumerated. The fruits are entry for thirty-six thousand, eight thousand and twenty thousand respectively.[89] These are the ancient qualities, progressively described, of donating cows and other objects. These are equal to donating a cow only when the eighth step has been completed.[90] A person who gives a cow enjoys good conduct. A person who donates the equivalent enjoys freedom from fear. Whether a cow or riches are given, the donor does not suffer from misery. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Those who know about what has been recounted ascend upwards to the worlds of Vishnu and the moon. Having given a cow away, the donor must practise the vow of cattle for three nights. For one night, he should dwell alone, with cattle. For three nights after *kamyashtami*, he should only subsist on cow's milk, cowdung and cow's urine. The donor of a bull obtains merits obtained by one who follows the vows of the Vedas. The donor of a couple of cows becomes knowledgable in the Vedas. If a person follows the rituals in giving away cows, he enjoys the best of worlds. However, this is not enjoyed by someone who doesn't know about the rituals. If a person gives away a single cow, he obtains all the objects of desire on earth. That cow is like one which satisfies all desires with its milk. If one properly observes *havya* and *kavya* [91] and gives away bulls, the benefits obtained are superior. The ritual must not be divulged to a person who is not a disciple, one who does not follow vows, one who lacks faith, or one who is crooked in intelligence. In all the worlds, this is indeed a secret dharma. This dharma must not be indiscriminately spoken about here and there. There may be men in this world who are virtuous and faithful. However, there are also inferior men, who are like rakshasas. If this is divulged to them, it will lead to injury. There will be evil ends if non-believers get to hear about this.

'"'There are kings who have listened to Brihaspati's instructions and have donated cows. They have been auspicious in conduct and have followed excellent vows. They have obtained the worlds. O king! I will recount their names. Listen to me—Ushinara, Vishvagashva, Nriga, Bhagiratha, Yuvanashva's famous son Mandhata, King Muchukunda, Bhuridyumna, Naishadha, Somaka, Pururava, Emperor Bharata, from whom all those of the Bharata lineage have descended, Rama, the brave son of Dasharatha, others who are famous for their deeds, and King Dilipa, whose deeds were extensive. They knew about the rituals, donated cows and went to heaven. King Mandhata was engaged in sacrifices, donations, austerities, royal dharma and donation of cows. O Partha! That is the reason I have spoken to you about Brihaspati's words. Bear them in mind. Cheerfully, give cows to the best of brahmanas. Having obtained the kingdom of the Kurus, you will then perform auspicious deeds.'"'

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Dharmaraja did everything that Bhishma had spoken to him about, following the ordinances about the donation of cows. The king properly upheld the dharma that the god of the gods[92] had instructed Mandhata about. O king! He always gave cows and subsisted on barley and cowdung, drinking the urine of cows. He controlled his soul, slept on the ground and sported a tuft of hair on his head. He was like a bull and became a bull among kings. Controlled in his soul, the king always praised cows and tended to the calves. The king no longer used cows as beasts of burden. Wherever he had to go, he used excellent horses instead.’

## Chapter 1757(76)

Vaishampayana said, ‘O king! The intelligent King Yudhishthira again humbly asked Shantanu’s son about the details concerning gifts of cows.

‘Yudhishthira said, “O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Yet again, tell me properly about the qualities associated with donating cows. O brave one! I am not satisfied with hearing this, which is like amrita.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘O king! Thus addressed by Dharmaraja, Shantanu’s son again properly told him about the qualities associated with the donation of cows.

‘Bhishma said, “The cow must have a calf and possess all the qualities. It must be covered with a garment and must be young. By giving such a cow to a brahmana, one is freed from all sins. There are worlds where there is no sun. If one donates a cow that cannot drink water and eat grass, or one that does not yield milk or has had its senses destroyed, one goes there. A cow that is old and diseased is like a well that has dried up. By giving such a cow to a brahmana, one enters darkness and faces hardships. A cow that is wicked, wrathful, diseased, weak, or one for which the agreed price has not been given, should never be donated. If a cow causes hardship to the recipient brahmana, there are no fruits. There is no valour or fruits in the worlds thus obtained. A cow that is strong, fragrant and good in conduct is praised by everyone. Just as Ganga is the best among rivers, a kapila is the best among cattle.”

‘Yudhishthira asked, “In acts of donating, all cows should be the same. Why then do the virtuous praise the gift of a kapila? O excellent one! I particularly desire to hear about this. You are capable of telling me.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O son! The ancients spoke about this and I heard what they said. I will tell you the details about how a rohini was created. Earlier, Svayambhu instructed Daksha to create offspring. Desiring the welfare of the subjects, he first created a means for their subsistence. O lord! The residents of heaven subsist by resorting to amrita. Like that, the subjects exist on the basis of a means of subsistence. The mobile are superior to the immobile and men are best among the mobile. The brahmanas are best among men and sacrifices depend on them. Soma is obtained through sacrifices and sacrifices depend on cows. When a means of subsistence was first arranged for subjects, the gods were delighted.[93] When beings were created, they began to clamour for a means of subsistence. Thirsty, and seeking a means of subsistence, they approached the one who was like a father and a mother.[94] Through his mental powers, he himself discerned what the various categories of beings

desired. To obtain strength, Prajapati imbibed some of the amrita. When he was satisfied, a fragrance wafted out and Surabhi[95] was created from this. He saw the cow Surabhi, the daughter who had been born from his mouth. Surabhi had daughters who are known as the mothers of all the worlds. They had complexions like gold and they were kapilas. They were cows that provided a means of subsistence for the subjects. With a complexion like that of amrita, they began to flow with milk in all directions. As it flowed, there were waves, and froth was created in the flow that resulted from amrita. Some of this was dislodged from the mouths of calves and fell down on Bhava, who was then on earth. When it fell down on his head, the lord was enraged. With the eye that was in the middle of his forehead, he glanced at the rohinis, as if to burn them down. O lord of the earth! Like the sun tinging the clouds with many kinds of colours, that energy of Rudra's created hues in the bodies of the kapilas. Some among them escaped by seeking refuge with Soma. Those which managed to do this retained their own complexions. The others assumed other colours.

'"Seeing that Mahadeva was angry, Prajapati[96] addressed him. 'You have been sprinkled with amrita. This is not a leftover from the cows.[97] Soma drinks up amrita and showers it down again. In that way, the rohinis shower down milk and it has been created from amrita. The wind, the fire, gold and the ocean are never tainted. That is the way with the amrita from cows, once the calves have drunk the amrita. They sustain the world with the milk and the ghee. All of us enjoy that prosperity and the auspicious pervasiveness of amrita.' O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having said this, Prajapati gave Rudra a bull and cows and pleased his heart. Pleased with this, Mahadeva made the bull his mount and placed it on his standard. Thus he became the one with the bull on his standard. Then the gods made Mahadeva Pashupati.[98] He became the lord of cattle and came to be known as Vrishanka.[99] The kapilas are extremely energetic and bear the original complexion. That is the reason why they are thought of first in any act of donation. They are the best among creatures, and the means of subsistence of creatures flows from them. They are placid and sacred. They grant life and all the objects of desire. A person who gifts a cow like that gives all the objects of desire. These are the supreme ordinances about the power of cattle. If a man desires the auspicious, is pure and always reads this, he is freed from all sins and taints. He obtains beloved sons and the wealth of animals. Havya, kavya, offerings of water, rites of pacification, gifts of vehicles and garments, the nurturing of the aged and the young—all of these qualities are obtained through donations of cows. O king! The donor always obtains those benefits.'"

Vaishampayana said, 'Hearing the grandfather's words, King Ajamidha and his brothers followed what he had said and made gifts of gold, brass and cows. Partha gave these to excellent brahmanas. He gave brahmanas hundreds and thousands of cattle. He instructed that sacrifices with dakshina should be performed. He obtained fame and conquered supreme worlds.'

## Chapter 1758(77)

'Bhishma said, "There was a time when King Soudasa, born of the Ikshvaku lineage and supreme among generous ones, went to Vasishtha, supreme among sages, who was successful and could roam around in all the worlds. He was the eternal store of the brahman. Having honoured him, he

asked his priest the following question.

‘“Soudasa asked, ‘O illustrious one! O unblemished one! What is sacred in the three worlds? Tell me. Recount to me the means whereby a mortal can always obtain the supreme benefits.”’

‘Bhishma continued, “He bowed down and spoke these beneficial words. The learned one instructed him about cattle, after having first purified himself by bowing down to cows. ‘Cows possess an excellent fragrance. They possess the fragrance of *guggula*.[100] Creatures owe their existence to cattle. Cows provide great blessings. Cows are the past and the future. Cows are eternal nourishment. Cows are the foundation of prosperity. Anything given to cows is not destroyed. Food always exists in cows. They provide supreme oblations for the gods. Svaha and *vashatkara* are always established in cows. Cows are the fruits of sacrifices. Sacrifices are established in cows. O immensely intelligent one! O bull among men! Morning and evening, and always at the time of oblations, cows provide oblations to rishis. O lord! If a person gifts a cow, he tides over all the sins and evil deeds he has committed and all the hardships he faces. If a person possesses ten cows and gifts one, if he possesses a hundred cows and gifts ten, if he possesses a thousand cows and gifts one hundred—all of them obtain equal fruits. However, if the owner of one hundred cattle doesn’t ignite the sacrificial fire, if the owner of one thousand cattle doesn’t perform sacrifices and if a prosperous person acts like a miser—all three of them warrant no respect. If a person observes excellent vows and gifts a kapila and a calf, with a brass vessel for milking and a garment covering the cow, he conquers both this world and the next. O scorcher of enemies! There may be a young bull, an Indra among cows, among the hundreds that are in the herd, with all its senses intact. If a person ornaments its horns and gives it to a learned brahmana, he obtains prosperity when he is repeatedly born. One should not go to sleep without reciting the names for cows, or awake without remembering them. If one bows down to cattle morning and evening, one obtains prosperity. One must not hate cow dung and the urine of cows. One must not eat the flesh of cows. Thus, one will obtain prosperity. One must always recite the names of cows. One must never disrespect cows. If a man has bad dreams, he must recite the names of cows. One must always bathe in cow dung. One must sit on dried cow dung. One must not release spit, urine and excrement on cow dung. One must avoid obstructing cows. When one eats, one must sit on moistened cow hide, looking towards the west. Restrained in speech, one must eat ghee off the ground. One will then obtain the prosperity that cattle confer. Ghee is offered as an oblation into the fire. Benedictions must be pronounced with ghee. If one gives ghee and eats ghee, one will obtain the prosperity that cattle confer. One may also pronounce mantras on a cow moulded out of sesamum, taking it to assume the form of a cow. If a person gifts this, with tasty food and jewels, one does not sorrow from sins committed and not committed.[101] Let cows that yield plentiful supplies of milk and have gold-encrusted horns approach me, like rivers approach the ocean. These are *surabhis* and the descendants of Surabhi. Let cows always look at me. Let me always look at cows. The cows belong to us and we belong to them. We exist where cows are. If a man chants this, day and night, in joy and misery, and even in times of great fear, he is freed from all fear.’”’

## Chapter 1759(78)

‘Vasishtha said, ‘The cattle that were originally created tormented themselves with extremely difficult austerities for hundreds of thousands of years, so that they might obtain superiority. O scorcher of enemies! They said, “Among all kinds of dakshina, we will become the best. The slightest bit of taint will never attach to us. Our dung will always be used for purifying gods and humans. Those who smear themselves with it will never be deprived of their senses. O one who grants honours![102] Among all the mobile and immobile objects that are given, those who gift us will go to Goloka.” At the end of those austerities, the lord Brahma himself gave them that boon. The lord agreed and said that they would save the worlds. Having become successful in the attainment of their wishes, the mothers of the past and the future arose. O great king! At the end of those austerities, people became devoted to cattle. Therefore, the immensely fortunate cattle are said to be supremely sacred. It is for this reason that cows stand ahead of all creatures. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding kapila cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Brahma’s world. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding rohini cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Surya’s world. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding dappled cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Soma’s world. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding white cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Indra’s world. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding black cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Agni’s world. If a person covers a well-behaved and milk-yielding smoky-complexioned cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains greatness in Yama’s world. If a person covers a cow that has the complexion of foam on water with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf and a brass vessel for milking, he obtains Varuna’s world. If a person covers a cow that has the complexion of the dust in the wind with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf and a brass vessel for milking, he obtains greatness in Vayu’s world. If a person covers a cow that has the complexion of gold, with reddish-brown eyes, with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf and a brass vessel for milking, he obtains Kubera’s world. If a person covers a cow that has the complexion of smoky straw with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf and a brass vessel for milking, he obtains greatness in the world of the ancestors. If a person gives away a fat cow with a white and ornamented throat, he easily obtains the best status with the Vishvadevas. If a person covers a well-behaved, milk-yielding and fair cow with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf, he obtains the world of the Vasus. If a person covers a cow that has the complexion of a white blanket with a piece of cloth and gives it away, with her calf and a brass vessel for milking, he obtains the world of the Sadhyas. If a person decorates a bull with a large hump with all the jewels and gives it away, he doesn’t suffer from old age and goes to the world of the Maruts. If a man decorates a blue-limbed bull that is no longer a calf with all the jewels and gives it away, he obtains the world of the gandharvas and the apsaras. If a person decorates a handsome bull with a white throat with all the jewels and gives it away, he obtains Prajapati’s world and suffers from no sorrow. O king! A person who is devoted to gifting cows shatters the clouds on a celestial vehicle that has the complexion of the sun and becomes radiant in heaven. A man who gifts cows is best among men. He finds delight, served by thousands of excellent women, dressed in beautiful garments and with attractive hips. He awakes and sleeps to the sounds of the laughter of those deer-eyed ones

and the sounds of veenas, lutes and anklets. He obtains greatness for as many years as there is hair on the cow donated. When he is dislodged from heaven and comes to the world of men, he is born in a family that owns cattle.’”’

## Chapter 1760(79)

‘“Vasishtha said, ‘Cows yield milk and ghee. They originate in ghee and provide ghee. They are rivers of ghee. They are whirlpools of ghee. Let them always remain in my house. Ghee is always in my heart. Ghee is always established in my navel. Ghee is in all my limbs. Ghee is established in my mind. Cows are always in front of me. Cows are also behind me. Cows are on all my sides. I dwell in the midst of cattle.’ Having performed the ablutions, a man must always recite this, morning and evening. He will then be cleansed of all the sins he has committed during the day. They who donate one thousand[103] go to places with golden palaces, with gandharvas and apsaras and a river of riches. They who donate one thousand go to places where rivers of milk flow, with butter as the mud and curds as the lichen. A person who follows the rituals and gives hundreds of thousands of cattle obtains supreme prosperity and greatness in Goloka. After death, he saves ten generations of his ancestors, both on his mother’s side and on his father’s side and gives them the worlds meant for the performers of good deeds. Such a man purifies his lineage. Among all objects that are the best, cattle are the foremost. If a person gives cows a trifle of food and water to drink, he does not suffer any misery in Yama’s world. They are the foremost among all that is sacred. The universe is based on them. They are immeasurable and are the mothers of the residents of heaven. When one walks, one must keep them on one’s right. Ascertaining the right time, one must give them to a worthy recipient. If a man gives away a kapila with large horns, along with her calf, a brass vessel for milking and an upper garment, even when he is submerged in Yama’s assembly hall, which is so very difficult to tolerate, he will be free from fear. One must always recite, “Cows are beautiful in form. Cows have many forms. Cows are like mothers of the universe. Let cows approach me.” There is no gift more sacred than that of a cow. There are no fruits that are more auspicious. There has been nothing that is superior to a cow, nor will there ever be. The cow bears the burden of the sacrifice through the skin, the hair, the horns, hair on the tail, the milk and the fat. What can be better? I bow down my head and worship the cow. She is the mother of the past and the future. All the mobile and immobile objects of the universe are pervaded by her. O best among men! I have only recounted some of the qualities of the cow. There is no gift that is superior to donating a cow. There is no other refuge that is superior.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “The great-souled lord of the earth[104] thought about the superiority that the supreme rishi had spoken about in his words. Controlled in his soul, he gave brahmanas a large number of cows and obtained the worlds.”’

## Chapter 1761(80)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “What is the most sacred among all the sacred things in the world? What is best? What is supremely purifying? O grandfather! Tell me that.”

‘Bhishma replied, “Cows are extremely valuable and sacred and they save men. They sustain subjects through their milk and ghee. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! There is nothing that is more sacred than cattle. They are the most sacred among all the sacred and excellent objects in the three worlds. Cows dwell in a region that is superior to that of the gods. O lord of men! Learned donors[105] go to heaven. Yuvanashva’s son, Mandhata, Yayati and Nahusha always respectfully gave away hundreds of thousands of cattle. They went to the supreme destination, one that is extremely difficult for even the gods to obtain. O unblemished one! There is an ancient story about this and I will recount it. Shuka was an excellent and intelligent rishi. Having controlled his mind, he purified himself through his morning ablutions and worshipping his father, Krishna Dvaipayana, who possessed insight about the supreme worlds, questioned him. ‘What do you think is the best sacrifice among all sacrifices? What do learned ones do to obtain supreme heaven? O lord! Through what act of purification do gods obtain heaven? What makes a sacrifice a sacrifice? What are sacrifices established on? What is a supreme gift? What is a supreme sacrifice? O unblemished one! Also tell me what is most sacred among all the objects that are sacred.’ O bull among the Bharata lineage! Hearing these words, Vyasa, supreme in his knowledge of dharma, told his son everything.

‘“Vyasa said, ‘Creatures are established on cattle and cows constitute the refuge. Cows are sacred and purify. They are the dharma that sanctifies. We have heard that, earlier, cows did not have horns. Indeed, for the sake of horns, they worshipped the undecaying lord. Brahma saw that cows were engaged in *praya*[106] near him. The lord gave each of those cows what they desired. Horns were created and they obtained horns. O son! With horns of many colours, they were beautiful. Having obtained boons from Brahma, they became the auspicious providers of havya and kavya. They are sacred, pure and extremely fortunate. They possess the signs of divine residence. The energy of cows is immensely divine. The gift of cows is praised. Virtuous people who, without malice, donate them, are spoken of as the doers of virtuous deeds, as if they have given all kinds of gifts. O unblemished one! They obtain the sacred Goloka. The trees produce sweet fruits there. The trees yield divine flowers and fruit. O supreme among brahmanas! The flowers possess excellent and celestial fragrances. The ground is covered with jewels everywhere. The sand is made out of fine gold. Everything is pleasant to the touch. There is no dust. It is auspicious and sparkling. There are groves of red lotuses and their stalks are made out of gems and gold. The waterbodies there are as radiant as the morning sun. There are lakes with many lotuses, mixed with blue lotuses. Their petals are made out of extremely expensive gems. Their filaments have a golden complexion. There are forests of blossoming red oleander, surrounded by thousands of creepers. There are also forests with trees adorned with blooming *santanakas*.[107] There are sparkling and extremely expensive rivers, with pearls and jewels along the colourful banks, decorated with gold. There are excellent and colourful trees, covered with gems everywhere. They are ornamented with gold and have the complexion of the fire. There are golden mountains and hills made out of gems and jewels. Because of the jewels everywhere, they exude radiance from their beautiful summits. The trees are covered with leaves and always yield flowers and fruit. O bull among the Bharata lineage![108] The flowers and fruits possess divine tastes and fragrances. O Yudhishthira! The performers of auspicious deeds always find bliss

there. They are devoid of sorrow and anger and are prosperous, with every object of desire satisfied. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The illustrious performers of auspicious deeds find pleasure and delight in wonderful and beautiful celestial vehicles there. O king! They sport with large numbers of beautiful apsaras. O Yudhishthira! These are the worlds obtained by those who donate cows. Pushan and the Maruts, strongest of the strong, are the lords there. In prosperity, they become like King Varuna. Firm in vows, one must always recite the words spoken by Brahma Prajapati—"May Yugandhara, Surupa, Bahurupa, Vishvarupa and Matara save me."[109] If a person respectfully serves cattle, they are satisfied and grant him boons that are extremely difficult to obtain. One must never injure cows, not even in one's mind. They are the ones who provide happiness. One must always bow down before them and worship and honour them. If a self-restrained person always does this cheerfully, he obtains the benefits associated with cattle. There is a sacred object that the gods eat and it is supreme in the worlds. This is ghee and it is the most sacred among all the items that are sacred. This must be carried on the head. Ghee is offered as oblation into the fire. Benedictions are pronounced with ghee. When ghee is consumed and ghee is donated, one obtains the benefits that are associated with cattle. For three days, one must drink warm cow's urine. For three days, one must drink warm milk. After having drunk warm milk, for three days, one must drink warm ghee. Having drunk warm ghee for three days, for three days, one must subsist on air. For one month, if one subsists on grains of barley that have been searched out from cow dung, one is cleansed from all sins, including that of killing a brahmana. When they were defeated by the *daityas*, the gods purified themselves in this way. The extremely powerful ones thus became successful and obtained divinity. Cows are sacred and auspicious. They are the great and supreme purifiers. Having donated them to brahmanas, a man obtains heaven. One must purify oneself by residing amidst cattle. In one's mind, one must meditate amidst cattle.[110] One must do this after having purified oneself through ablutions first. One will then become pure and clean. A brahmana who is the performer of auspicious deeds and is learned in the Vedas and follows vows, must bathe and recite it[111] in the presence of the sacred fire, amidst cattle and in an assembly of brahmanas. Teaching the gomati to disciples is as revered as performing a sacrifice. If a person fasts for three nights and hears the gomati, he obtains a boon. A person who desires a son obtains a son. Others obtain riches. One who desires a husband obtains a husband. Men obtain all their objects of desire. There is no doubt that when cattle are served and are satisfied, they grant all this. In this way, these immensely fortunate ones provide all the objects of desire sought through sacrifices. Know that rohinis are like this and there is nothing superior to them.'"

'Bhishma continued, "The immensely energetic Shuka was addressed by his great-souled father in this way. He always worshipped cattle. Therefore, you should also worship them."'

# Chapter 1762(81)

‘Yudhishthira said, “I have heard that cow dung has Shri[112] in it. I have a great doubt about this and wish to hear about it.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O supreme among the Bharata lineage! O king! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between cows and Shri. Shri assumed a beautiful form and entered amidst cattle. The cows were astounded on seeing her wealth of beauty.

‘“The cattle asked, ‘O goddess! Who are you? Where have you come from? How do you possess a beauty that is unmatched on earth? O immensely fortunate one! We are astounded at the wealth of your beauty. We wish to know who you are and where you will go. O one with the extremely beautiful complexion! Tell us the entire truth.’

‘“Shri replied, ‘O fortunate ones! I am loved by the worlds. I am famous by the name of Shri. When I abandoned the daityas, they were destroyed for eternity. Having obtained me, Indra, Vivasvat, Soma, Vishnu, the water[113] and Agni have obtained prosperity and so have the rishis and the other gods. O cattle! Those who hate me are destroyed in every way. They suffer misery and are devoid of dharma, artha and kama. O cattle! These are my powers. Know that I am the one who grants happiness. I wish to always dwell in each of you. O unblemished ones! I have come here to pray that you should be united with Shri.’

‘“The cows replied, ‘You are temporary and fickle. You dwell with many ordinary people. O fortunate one! We do not desire you. Go wherever it pleases you. We think ourselves to be beautiful in every way. Why do we need you now? Go wherever you want. You have already made us successful.’

‘“Shri said, ‘O cattle! Pardon me, but shouldn’t you welcome me? Why don’t you accept me? I am extremely difficult to obtain. O ones who follow excellent vows in the world! It is certain that a saying in the worlds is true. “If one presents oneself voluntarily, one is refused.” Men, gods, danavas, gandharvas, serpents and rakshasas get me after performing great and fierce austerities. O cattle! Pardon me and accept me. O amiable ones! I am not ignored by anything mobile and immobile in the three worlds.’

‘“The cattle replied, ‘O goddess! We are not disrespecting you. Nor are we slighting you. You are temporary and fickle. That is the reason we are forsaking you. What is the need to speak a lot? Go wherever you wish. O unblemished one! All of us possess beautiful forms. Why do we need you?’

‘“Shri said, ‘O ones who grant honours! Refused by you, I will be ignored in all the worlds. Show me your favours. O immensely fortunate ones! You offer protection to those who seek refuge. I am without blemish. Save the one who is always worshipped. O auspicious ones! I desire your respect and will always reside with you. I wish to dwell in any of your limbs, irrespective of how ugly it is. O unblemished ones! Indeed, I do not perceive that any of your limbs is ugly. You are sacred, auspicious and extremely fortunate. Grant me a place. You should indicate one of your limbs where I may dwell.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “Thus addressed, the auspicious cattle were overcome with compassion. O lord of men! All of them consulted each other and spoke to Shri. ‘O illustrious one! It is indeed our

task that we should show you respect. O auspicious one! Therefore, reside in our urine and dung. Both of these are sacred.'

'"Shri replied, 'It is through good fortune that you have shown me your favours and your grace. O fortunate ones! It shall be that way. O ones who grant happiness! I have been honoured by you.'"

'Bhishma continued, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This was the agreement between Shri and the cattle. While they looked on, she disappeared. O son! I have thus described to you the greatness of cow dung. I will again tell you about the greatness of cattle. Listen to me."'

## Chapter 1763(82)

'Bhishma said, "O Yudhishthira! Those who donate cows and subsist on leftovers after oblations have been rendered into the fire are always regarded as having performed all the sacrifices. No sacrifice can be performed without curds and ghee. It is seen that these are the essence of a sacrifice and the foundation for a sacrifice. Among all kinds of gifts, the donation of cows is praised. Cows are best and sacred. They are the supreme purifiers. They must be served for the sake of sustenance and for the sake of peace. Their milk, curds and ghee can cleanse all sins. It is said that the energy of cows is supreme, in this world and in the next world. O bull among men! There is nothing that is superior to, and more sacred than, cattle.

'"O Yudhishthira! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted, about a conversation between the grandfather and Indra. When Shakra defeated the daityas and became the lord of the three worlds, all the subjects were delighted and became devoted to true dharma. O Kouravya! On one occasion, the rishis, the gandharvas, the *kinnaras*, the rakshasas, the gods, the asuras, the birds and the Prajapatis arrived before the grandfather and worshipped him. Narada and Parvata were there. Vishvavasu, Haha and Huhu worshipped the lord by singing divine hymns. The wind bore the scent of celestial flowers. The seasons assembled, conveying their separate fragrances. All the creatures gathered together in that assembly of gods. Celestial musical instruments were sounded. The place was surrounded by celestial women and *charanas*. Indra, lord of the gods, bowed down before the lord of all the worlds. He asked, 'O illustrious god! O grandfather! I wish to know why cattle are supreme in the worlds. O great lord! What are the austerities and brahmacharya that cattle have performed? Why do they happily reside in a region that is above that of the gods?' At this, Brahma replied to Shakra, the slayer of Bala. 'O slayer of Bala! You have always shown cattle disrespect. That is the reason you do not know about their greatness. O lord! Listen. O bull among gods! Hear about the supreme greatness and power of cattle. O Vasava! Cows are said to constitute the limbs of a sacrifice. They represent fame. Without resorting to them, sacrifices can never be undertaken. They sustain subjects through their milk and ghee. That apart, their male offspring are yoked for agriculture. That is the way grain and many other kinds of seeds are generated. All the havya and kavya used in sacrifices flow from them. O lord of the gods! Milk, curd and ghee are pure. Even when they are hungry, thirsty and afflicted, they bear many kinds of burdens. Through their deeds, they sustain sages and subjects. O Vasava! They do not show any deceit in bearing the burdens. They are the performers of good deeds. That is the reason they always reside above us. O Shakra! O Shatakratu! I have now explained to you the

reason why cattle have obtained an abode that is above that of the gods. O Vasava! They are the ones who grant boons. They are the granters of boons. Surabhis are the performers of auspicious deeds. They have sacred marks and are purifiers. O supreme among the gods! Listen to the reason why the descendants of Surabhi, the cows, have come down.[114] O slayer of Bala! I will tell you the entire reason. Listen. O son![115] In ancient times, in the yuga of the gods, there was a great-souled Indra among the daityas who subjugated the three worlds. O best among the immortals! To obtain a son through Vishnu, Aditi[116] performed extremely difficult and terrible austerities. She always stood only on one leg. Daksha had a daughter, the goddess named Surabhi. On seeing that the great goddess[117] was tormenting herself through great austerities, she too cheerfully decided to torment herself through terrible austerities. Devoted to dharma, she did this on the beautiful summit of Kailasa, frequented by the gods and the gandharvas. She stood on one leg and resorted to supreme yoga. She spent eleven thousand years in this way. The gods, the rishis and the great serpents were scorched through her austerities. With me, they went there and worshipped the auspicious one. O Purandara! I spoke to the goddess who was engaged in austerities. “O goddess! O unblemished one! Why are you tormenting yourself through these terrible austerities? O immensely fortunate one! O beautiful one! I am pleased at your austerities.

O goddess! Ask for a boon and I will grant it to you.” Surabhi replied, “O illustrious one! O grandfather of the worlds! I do not desire any boons. O unblemished one! Since you are pleased with me, I have already got the boon I want.” O lord of the thirty gods! This is what the goddess Surabhi told me. O Indra of the gods! O Shachi’s consort! Hear what I told her in reply. “O goddess! I am pleased at your lack of desire and auspicious austerities. Since I am pleased with you, I am granting you the boon of immortality. Your abode will always be above the three worlds. Through my favours, this will be famous as Goloka. Your sons will dwell among men and will always perform tasks for the subjects. O immensely fortunate one! Your daughters will also reside there. All the divine and human objects of pleasure you think of will be yours. O goddess! O fortunate one! Divine happiness will also be yours.” O one with the thousand eyes! Her world has all the objects of desire. Death, old age and fire does not cause any suffering there. O Vasava! There is nothing miserable or inauspicious there. There are divine forests and celestial residences there. O Vasava! There are celestial vehicles that can go wherever they wish. O lotus-eyed one! Through observing many kinds of auspicious vows, through frequenting tirthas, through great austerities and through good deeds, one is capable of going to Goloka. O Shakra! I have thus told you everything that you asked me about. O slayer of enemies! You should never show disrespect to cattle.’ O Yudhishthira! Hearing these words, the one with the thousand eyes always worshipped cows and always showed them a great deal of respect.

‘“O immensely radiant one! I have thus told you everything about their purifying nature. Cows are sacred and supreme. They possess excellent greatness. O tiger among men! They destroy all sins and I have told you about this. If a person controls himself and always recounts this to brahmanas on occasions where havya and kavya are offered, sacrifices performed and rites observed for the ancestors, he establishes his ancestors in a place that is inexhaustible, one that satisfies all the objects of desire. A man who is devoted to cows obtains everything that he wishes for. Women who are devoted to cows also obtain everything that they desire. One who desires a son obtains a son. A maiden obtains a husband. One who desires riches obtains wealth. One who desires dharma obtains

dharma. One who desires learning obtains learning. One who desires happiness obtains happiness. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! For someone who is devoted to cows, there is nothing that is difficult to obtain."'

## Chapter 1764(83)

'Yudhishthira said, "O grandfather! You have spoken to me about the supreme donation of cows. This is especially true of kings who look towards dharma. A kingdom is always full of misery. It cannot be sustained by a person who is ignorant. A family is the source of misery. It is difficult for a person who has not cleansed his soul to bear that burden. Most kings fail to obtain an auspicious end. However, by donating the earth, they can always purify themselves. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! You have spoken to me about dharma earlier. In that way, you have told me about the gift Nriga made of cattle. You have told me about the earlier instructions of rishi Nachiketa. The Vedas and the Upanishads have instructed that in all rites and in all sacrifices, dakshina must be in the form of land, cattle or gold. But the sacred texts have also said that gold is the supreme dakshina. O grandfather! I wish to hear the truth about this. What is gold? How was it created and when? What is its nature? What are the fruits from donating it? Why is it said to be supreme? Why do learned people revere the gift of gold? Why is it praised as dakshina in the rites associated with sacrifices? Why is gold regarded as a better purifier than land and cattle? Why is it a supreme dakshina? O grandfather! Tell me this."

'Bhishma replied, "O king! I will recount in detail the many reasons. Listen attentively to the origin of gold, as I have understood it. When Shantanu, my greatly energetic father, died, I went to Gangadvara, wishing to perform his funeral ceremony. O son! Having gone there, I commenced the funeral rites for my father. My mother, Jahnavi, helped me. I placed many rishis, who had obtained success through fierce austerities, at the forefront and asked them to be seated. I began the offering of water and the other rites. As instructed, I controlled myself and completed the preliminary rites. In the proper way, I then started to offer the funeral libations. O lord of the earth! At that time, an arm pierced through the darbha grass that had been spread out and rose up. It was adorned in beautiful armlets. On seeing it rise, I was struck by great wonder. O bull among the Bharata lineage! I thought that my father had himself come to receive what was being offered. When I regained my senses, I began to think about the sacred texts. O lord! The ordinances of the Vedas decree that a man must not render the funeral cake into a hand. That was my view. The ancestors are invisible. They do not appear before a man in visible form. It is said that the funeral cake must be offered on a mat of kusha grass and that it will be received from there. Therefore, I ignored what seemed to be my father's hand. O king! I remembered the subtle rituals that are laid down in the sacred texts. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O bull among men! Know that I followed the method indicated in the sacred texts and offered everything on the mat of darbha grass. O lord of men! At this, my father's arm disappeared. When I slept,[118] my ancestors appeared before me and told me, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! We are pleased and delighted with you for your knowledge. You have not been confused about dharma. O king! You have acted in accordance with the proofs laid down in the sacred texts. You have maintained yourself, dharma, the sacred texts, the Vedas, your ancestors, the maharshis, Brahma, the

grandfather, the preceptors and Prajapati. There has been no deviation from the proofs that have been laid down. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Today, you have completed everything in the proper way. But to accomplish the purpose, what will be achieved with land and cattle? Donate gold. It is supremely cleansing. By following this act of dharma, we and all our ancestors will be purified. If you donate gold, ten generations of your ancestors and descendants will be saved.' My ancestors spoke in this way. O king! O lord of the earth! I was astounded and woke up. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! I turned my mind towards donating gold. '"O king! O lord! Listen to this ancient history about Jamadagni's son, which is praiseworthy and leads to an increase in the lifespan. In ancient times, Rama, Jamadagni's son, was overcome by great rage and exterminated all the kshatriyas from earth twenty-one times. Having conquered the entire earth, the brave and lotus-eyed Rama made arrangements for a sacrifice that was honoured by brahmanas and kshatriyas. O great king! This was a horse sacrifice that grants all the objects of desire. It purifies all creatures and leads to the enhancement of energy and resplendence. Because of the fruits of that sacrifice, that energetic one was cleansed of his sins. However, despite performing that supreme sacrifice and offering dakshina, Jamadagni's great-souled son still did not obtain lightness of heart. Bhargava met the gods and the rishis and asked them. He said, 'For men who have indulged in fierce deeds, what is the supreme purifier? O ones without decay! O immensely fortunate ones! Tell me.' Overcome by compassion, this is what he asked. The maharshis who knew about the sacred texts and the Vedas replied. Vasishtha said, 'Give gold to the gods. All the gods are nothing but fire and gold is its essence. Therefore, donate gold. Give it to all the gods. O tiger among men! The learned know that there is nothing superior to it. O brahmana rishi! O supreme among all the bearers of weapons! Listen to me. I will again[119] tell you about the greatness of gold. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! Earlier, I heard about this in the ancient accounts. Prajapati spoke about this to Svayambhu Manu. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! The marriage of the great-souled and illustrious Rudra, the wielder of the trident, and the goddess Rudrani was completed on the slopes of the excellent Himalaya mountains. The illustrious and great-souled one was about to unite with the goddess. Everyone was anxious and approached the illustrious one. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Mahadeva was seated with the goddess Uma, the granter of boons. All of them bowed down their heads and spoke to Rudra. "O god! O unblemished one! This union of yours with the goddess is of one ascetic with another ascetic, of one energy with an extremely greater energy. O god! Your energy, and that of the goddess Uma, are both invincible. O god! O lord! Your offspring will be powerful. There is no doubt that he will leave nothing left in the three worlds. O large-eyed one! The gods are bowing down before you. O lord of the worlds! For the welfare of the three worlds, grant them a boon. Withdraw your supreme and blazing energy, which will give rise to offspring." Hearing their words, the illustrious one, with the bull on his banner, agreed and accordingly replied to the gods and the brahmana rishis. Having said this and having held up his seed, the one with the bull as his mount came to be known as Urdhvareta.[120] Since then, he has held up his seed. However, Rudrani became angry at this termination of offspring. Though she was a woman, she used harsh words and spoke to the gods. "You have restrained my husband's desire to have offspring. Therefore, all of you gods will no longer have offspring. Since you have stopped me from having offspring, you will also be restricted in that way." Therefore, the residents of heaven no longer have offspring. O extender of

the Bhrigu lineage! But at the time when this curse was imposed, the fire god was not present. Because of the curse imposed by the goddess, the gods no longer had offspring. A little bit of Rudra's unsurpassed energy was dislodged and fell down on the earth, which held it up. That fell into the fire and a wonderful being began to grow. With energy having come into contact with another energy, an embryo was formed. At this time, with Shakra at the forefront, the gods were severely tormented by the asura named Taraka. The Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Maruts, the Ashvins and all the Sadhyas were terrified by the daitya's valour. The asuras seized the regions of the gods, their celestial vehicles, their cities and the hermitages of the rishis. All the gods and the rishis were distressed in their minds. They sought refuge with the lord and god, the undecaying Brahma.'"'

## Chapter 1765(84)

'"The gods said, 'O lord! The asura Taraka has obtained boons from you and is causing suffering to the gods and the rishis. Determine a method for his death. O grandfather! A great fear has been generated in us. O god! Save us. We have no other refuge.'

'"Brahma replied, 'I am impartial towards all beings, but *adharma* doesn't please me. Let Taraka, the impediment to large numbers of gods and rishis, be quickly destroyed. O supreme among gods! The dharma of the Vedas must not be uprooted. I have already determined what must be done. Dispel your anxiety.'

'"The gods said, 'O illustrious one! Since you gave him a boon, that daitya is proud of his strength. The gods are unable to slay him. How can he be pacified? O grandfather! The boon he obtained from you was that he couldn't be killed by gods, asuras and rakshasas. O lord of the entire universe! Earlier, at the time of procreation, the gods have also been cursed by Rudrani and they will not have offspring.'

'"Brahma replied, 'O best among gods! Agni was not present at the time. To kill the one who hates the gods, he will have a son who will surpass all the gods, danavas, rakshasas, men, gandharvas, serpents and birds. He will kill him with the invincible weapon of a spear. He will destroy the one who has led to your fear and all the other enemies of the gods. Resolution is eternal and is known as kama. Rudra's energy fell down into the fire. That energy is like a second fire. For killing the enemies of the gods, Agni will fling it into the Ganga and a son will be born. Since Agni wasn't present, that seed has not been affected by the curse. Thus, to remove the fears of the gods, Pavaki will be born.[121] Search out the fire god and employ him for this task. O unblemished ones! I have told you about the means for Taraka's death. The energy of the curse will have no effect on this energy. When strength encounters a greater strength, it is rendered weak. Ascetics are capable of slaying the granters of boons, ones who are indestructible.[122] Resolution, inclination and kama are eternal. Agni has been ordained as the lord of the universe. He can go everywhere and is the creator of everything. He is in the hearts of all beings. The lord is older than even Rudra. Swiftly search out Agni, the mass of energy. O gods! He will accomplish the desire that there is in your hearts.'

'"Vasishtha continued, 'Hearing the words of the great-souled one, the gods thought that their wishes had been accomplished and began to search for Agni. The gods and the rishis searched

everywhere in the three worlds. Single-mindedly, all of them looked for Agni. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage![123] They were supreme in austerities, handsome and famous in the worlds. Those successful ones could roam around in all the worlds. But since Agni had hidden himself in his own self, they couldn't search him out.[124] There was a frog that dwelt in the water. Since it was scorched by Agni's energy, the frog arose from the nether regions and spoke to the gods. "O gods! The lord Agni is residing in the nether regions. I have come here, having been consumed by Agni's power. O gods! The illustrious bearer of oblations is sleeping in the water. The energy that has been released in the water has scorched all of us. O gods! If you wish to see Agni and if you have anything to do with Agni, go there. O gods! Because of our fear of Agni, we will try to leave this place." Having said this, the frog quickly entered the water again. The bearer of oblations got to know about the frog's treachery and cursed it that it would no longer have any sense of taste. Having thus cursed the frog, the lord Agni departed, so that he could reside elsewhere and would not have to show himself to the gods. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! But the gods showed their compassion towards frogs. O mighty-armed one! I will tell you everything. Listen.'

'"The gods said, 'Because of Agni's curse, your tongues will no longer have any sensation of taste. But you will be able to utter many kinds of sound. You will dwell in holes, without food and without any sensation. When the ground is dry and without any sign of life, you will still be able to sustain yourselves. You will roam around in the night, when darkness has enveloped everything.'

'"Vasishtha continued, 'After saying this, the gods wandered around the earth again, looking for Agni. But they couldn't find Agni. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! There was an elephant that was like the elephant that belonged to Indra of the gods. It told the gods, "Agni is inside an *ashvattha* tree." Senseless with rage, Agni cursed all the elephants. "Your tongues will bend backwards." O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Having said this, since he had been singled out by the elephant, Agni left the ashvattha tree. Wishing to sleep, Agni entered inside a *shami* tree. O lord! O best among the Bhrigu lineage! However, the gods, with truth as their valour, were pleased with elephants and showed them their compassion. Listen.'

'"The gods said, 'Though your tongues will bend backwards, you will be able to eat everything. And you will still be able to utter words, though the syllables will be indistinct.'

'"Vasishtha continued, 'After saying this, the residents of heaven began to search for Agni again. Agni had left the ashvattha tree and was now inside a shami tree. O brahmana! A parrot told the gods about this and they went there. Agni cursed parrots, "You will no longer have the power of speech." Because of what the bearer of oblations had said, their tongues became that way. The gods saw Agni at the place that the parrot had indicated and did not wish that the bird should be completely destroyed. They said, "Though your tongue is concealed, you will utter beautiful words. Though indistinct, they will be wonderful, like those spoken by old people and children." Having said this, the gods saw Agni inside the shami tree and ordained that the shami tree would be regarded as an abode for the gods, with its sacred wood used in all the rites. Since then, Agni has always been found inside a shami tree and men have used it to ignite a fire.[125] The water in the nether regions came into contact with Agni. O Bhargava! Those heated waters are released through mountain springs. Since Agni resided in them, they became heated through his energy. On seeing the gods, Agni was distressed. Agni asked, "Why have you come here?" They replied, "O illustrious one! You should accomplish a task for us. You

possess extremely great qualities and you should do this for us." Agni said, "O gods! Tell me what the task is and I shall do everything for you. You should not think about it. Employ me for the purpose." The gods replied, "There is an asura named Taraka. Because of a boon received from Brahma, he has become insolent. He counters us through his energy. You must arrange for his destruction. O father![126] O immensely fortunate one! O Pavaka! Save this large number of gods, large number of Prajapatis and the rishis. O lord! Give birth to a brave son who is full of energy. O bearer of oblations! He will destroy our fear from the asura. We have been cursed by the great goddess and no one else can be a refuge. Barring your energy, there is nothing else that can save us now." Thus addressed, the illustrious devourer of havya and kavya agreed.

'"'The invincible one went to Ganga Bhagirathi. He united with her and caused the conception.[127] The embryo began to grow, just as the one with the black trails[128] grows in the presence of deadwood. Because of the energy in the womb, Ganga was bereft of her senses. She suffered from terrible torment and was incapable of bearing it. When the lord Agni placed the energy in Ganga's womb, there was an asura who emitted a terrible roar. Because of that loud roar, she lost her senses. Ganga was terrified and her eyes rolled in fear. She looked around in agitation. Bereft of her senses, she was no longer capable of bearing herself or the embryo. With the energy pervading all her limbs, Jahnavi trembled. O brahmana! Struck by the strength of the embryo, she told Agni, "O illustrious one! I am incapable of bearing this energy any longer. I am confounded and am suffering from great ill health. O illustrious one! O unblemished one! I am distracted and your energy has destroyed me. O supreme among those who heat! I am no longer capable of bearing this embryo. Though I do not desire it, because of the misery, I will have to cast it off. O god! O Vibhavasu! I did not voluntarily wish this union with you. O immensely radiant one! Our extremely subtle relationship arose because of the disaster. O Agni! Any qualities that result from this relationship are because of you. The dharma and adharma belong to you alone. That is what I think." However, Agni replied, "Bear what must be borne. The embryo is the outcome of my energy and it will lead to great qualities and fruits. You are capable of bearing the entire earth. There is nothing that you will gain by not holding onto this seed." The best among rivers was restrained by Agni and also by the gods.

'"'However, she released the embryo on Meru, best among mountains. Though she was capable of bearing it, she suffered from Rudra's energy. Therefore, she was incapable of bearing the embryo and the associated energy. Overcome by misery, she released it and it blazed, like the fire in complexion. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Agni saw Ganga and asked the best among rivers, "Is the embryo well? O goddess! What is its complexion? What is seen to be its form? What kind of energy does it possess? Tell me everything." Ganga replied, "O Agni! With your energy, the embryo has the complexion of gold. It is golden, sparkling and blazing and has illuminated the mountain. O supreme among the ones who heat! Its fragrance is like that of the *kadamba* flower, mixed with that of lotuses from the cool lakes. Every object that has been touched by the energy of the embryo, on earth and in the mountains, is like the rays of the sun. In every direction, everything is seen to have turned into gold. That energy has descended on mountains, rivers, streams and the mobile and immobile objects in the three worlds and illuminated them. O illustrious one! O bearer of oblations! This is the form of that son. His beauty is like that of the sun or the fire, or like that of the moon." Having said this, the goddess vanished. The energetic Pavaka had also accomplished the task of the residents of

heaven. O descendant of the Bhargava lineage! Therefore, he also left the spot. It is because of the qualities of his deeds that the rishis and the gods conferred a name on Agni and it is recited in the worlds. This is Hiranyareta.[129] The goddess earth came to be known as Vasumati.[130] Ganga's immensely energetic embryo was generated through Agni. It fell on a divine clump of reeds and began to grow there, assuming a wonderful form. The Krittikas[131] saw it there and it was like the young sun in radiance. Their affection being stirred, they nourished the child at their own breasts. That is how the extremely radiant one came to be known as Kartikeya. Since the seed had fallen down, he came to be known as Skanda.[132] Since he resided in secrecy, he came to be known as Guha. This was the way gold was born from Agni. That is the reason gold is the best ornament for the gods. That is the reason it is spoken of as *jatarupa.*[133] Gold is nothing but the illustrious Girisha and Prajapati. O supreme among brahmanas! Gold is the most sacred among everything that is sacred. *Jatarupa* is said to possess the essence of Agni and Soma. It is the best jewel among all jewels. It is the supreme ornament. It is the most sacred among all things sacred. It is the most auspicious among all things that are auspicious.'"'

## Chapter 1766(85)

'Vasishtha said, 'O Rama! In ancient times, I heard this from Brahma. This is about the conduct of the grandfather, identical with the brahman and the *paramatman.* O son! The gods performed a great sacrifice of *varuni.*[134] O Rama! The lord Rudra assumed a resplendent form and went to that great varuni. All the sages and gods came there, with Agni at the forefront. All the limbs of sacrifices and vashatkara were there in personified form. Thousands of hymns from the Sama and Yajur Vedas were there in personified form. There were parts of the Vedas, arranged in the proper order of verses. There were the divisions of signs, vowels, chants and distinct and indistinct syllables. Omkara was there, with techniques of *nigraha* and *pragraha.*[135] There were the Vedas, the Upanishads, all kinds of learning and Savitri. The illustrious Shiva upheld these and the past, the present and the future. The lord offered the oblations himself. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Delighted that the varuni sacrifice was being conducted by the great-souled Pashupati, the wives and daughters of the gods and the mothers of the gods came there. On seeing them, Brahma's semen fell down on the ground. When that semen fell down on the ground, Pushan seized it with his hands and flung it into the fire. The sacrifice continued, with the fire blazing away. Brahma was offering oblations into the fire. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! He picked up some of the dislodged semen in a sacrificial ladle, and uttering the mantras, offered it as a libation into the fire. Through this, the valiant one generated categories of beings. From that energy was generated all the energy in the world. The ignorance of *tamas* and *sattva*[136] pervaded everything. The energy of sattva is eternal and tamas characterizes space. The energy of sattva and tamas exist in all creatures. O lord! From the semen that was offered as a libation into the fire, three beings manifested themselves. These were men, endowed with the qualities from which they had been generated. The one from *bhrig*[137]was known as Bhrigu. The one from *angara* was called Angiras. Yet another, based on angara, was called Kavi.[138] The one born with flames and bhrig was called Bhrigu. Marichi was born from *marichi*[139] and Kashyapa was born from

Marichi. O son! Angiras was born from angara. The Valakhilyas were born from the sacrificial stones. It has been said that Atri was also born from that. The large number of revered brahmana rishis was generated from the ashes. The Vaikhanasas were born, with the qualities of austerities and learning. The handsome Ashvins were born from his[140] ears. Finally, the Prajapatis were born from his ears. The rishis were born from his pores and the metres from his unclean sweat. That is the reason Agni is said to represent all the gods and the learned rishis, who possess insight about the proofs of the Vedas. The months are the wood.[141] The essence of the kindling constitutes the *pakshas*. Day and night are from the bile. The light from the varuni constitute the *muhurtas*. The Rudras are said to come from his blood, as do the red and golden Maitras. Know that the Vasus are said to come from the smoke. The immensely radiant Rudras and Adityas arose from the flames. The benevolent gods located in the firmament[142] arose from the angara. He[143] is the original lord of the worlds. Brahma is spoken about later. The bearer of oblations is said to be the one who satisifies all the objects of desire. With the varuni as part of his supreme soul, Mahadeva said, "This is my divine sacrifice. I am the *grihapati*.[144] There is no doubt that the three earlier offspring[145] are mine. O those roaming in the sky! Know that these are the fruits of the sacrifice." Agni responded, "They have been generated from my limbs and they have depended on me. They are my offspring and the one who is in the form of varuni[146] is wrong." Brahma, the preceptor of the worlds and the grandfather of the worlds said, "They are my offspring. It was my semen that was offered as a libation. I am the one who uttered the mantras. I am the one who offered the semen as a libation. The fruit belongs to the one whose seed it is. It is my view that the semen was the source." At this, the large number of gods approached the grandfather.

'"'All of them bowed their heads down and worshipped him. They said, "O illustrious one! We, and all the mobile and immobile objects in the universe, were generated from you. However, let Agni Vibhavasu and the lord god who is in the form of varuni get what they wish."[147] Though Brahma was the original lord of all creation, the one who was in the form of varuni accepted the firstborn, Bhrigu, with a radiance like that of the sun, as his son. The lord[148] determined that for purposes of deciding a son, Angiras should be Agni's. Kavi, who knew about the truth, was accepted as the grandfather's son. Bhrigu, of terrible fame, engaged himself in the act of procreation. The handsome Angiras was regarded as Agni's and the immensely illustrious Kavi as Brahma's. In this world, Bhrigu and Angiras are regarded as the ones who have had descendants. All the best among brahmanas are the offspring of these three. All the descendants were reared and nurtured by them. Bhrigu had seven sons who were like Bhrigu in qualities. They were Chyavana, Vajrashirsha, Shuchi, Urva, the revered Shukra, Vibhu and Savana. These were the seven. All of them are known as Bhargavas and Varunas and this is your lineage too. Angiras had eight sons and they are also known as Varunas.[149] They are Brihaspati, Utathya, Vayasya, Shanti, Ghora, Virupa, Samvarta and Sudhanva. These are said to be the eight. All of them were generated through Agni. They were free from disease and were devoted to learning. The sons of the brahmana, Kavi, are also known as Varunas. There were eight of them and they possessed the qualities. They were sacred and knowledgable about the brahman. Their names were Kavi, Kavya, Vishnu, the intelligent Ushanas, Bhrigu, Viraja, Kashi and Ugra, who was devoted to dharma. These are the eight sons of Kavi. Everyone in the universe has descended from them. They are Prajapatis and all these offspring have resulted from them. In this way, Angiras and Kavi also had

descendants. O tiger among the Bhrigu lineage! All the offspring on earth come from their lineage and that of Bhrigu. O brahmana! O son! In the form of varuni, the lord and god[150] originally accepted Bhrigu and Kavi. That is the reason they are known as Varunas. The crested bearer of oblations accepted Angiras. That is the reason all the others are known as the descendants of Angiras.

‘“‘In ancient times, the grandfather, Brahma, was pleased by the gods. They said, “Let these lords and offspring save us. Let these offspring have more offspring. Let all of them be extreme ascetics. Through your favours, let them eternally save the world. Let them be the creators of your lineage and let them extend your energy. Let them possess knowledge of the Vedas and let them be the lords of speech. Let them be amiable and on the side of the gods. Let them be Prajapatis and maharshis. Let them obtain austerities and supreme brahmacharya. O lord! All of us and they are your offspring. O grandfather! You are the creator of the gods and the brahmanas. Marichi is your original son. But so are all the Bhargavas. O grandfather! Considering all your offspring, forgive us.[151] In their own ways, they will generate offspring. At the end of the destruction and the beginning of a new yuga, they will establish themselves again.” At the time of the origin of the worlds, this is what happened at the sacrifice of the great-souled one, the best of the gods who assumed the dazzling form of varuni. Agni is Brahma, Pashupati, Sharva, Rudra and Prajapati.

‘“‘It is held that gold is the offspring of Agni. When fire is not available, gold can be used instead of fire. O Jamadagni’s son! O one who knows about proof! The learned texts and the Vedas are proof of this. Gold can be placed on a mat of kusha grass and oblations to the fire offered there. It is thought that the illustrious one will be pleased at these oblations and will ensure prosperity. We have thus heard that Agni is supreme among the gods. Agni was created from Brahma and gold from Agni. Therefore, those who possess insight about dharma donate gold. We have heard that this is like making gifts of all the gods. O Bhargava! Such a donor leaves the world of darkness and obtains the supreme objective. He is consecrated as a king of kings in the world of heaven. When the sun rises, if a person observes the rituals and recites the appropriate mantras first, thereafter donating gold, he destroys all his bad dreams. If he donates as soon as the sun has risen, he cleanses all his sins. If he donates gold at midday, he destroys all the future sins. If a person is firm in his vows and donates gold at the time of the western *sandhya*,[152] he obtains the worlds of Brahma, Vayu, Agni and Soma. With Indra, he obtains an auspicious status in those worlds. He is tranquil in his soul and obtains happiness and fame in this world too. He always obtains many other unmatched worlds. There are no obstructions in his path and he can roam around as he wills. He obtains an eternal greatness that is never dislodged. By donating gold, a person obtains all the indestructible worlds. At the time of sunrise, if a person ignites a fire and donates,[153] after having followed all the indicated vows, he obtains all the objects of desire. It has been said that it[154] is like Agni and its donation brings happiness. For those who follow rites, it is said to possess all the qualities.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “This is what Vasishtha told Jamadagni’s powerful son. He gave gold to brahmanas and was freed from all sins. O lord of the earth! I have told you everything about gold, about the fruits from its donation and its supreme birth and origins. Therefore, give a lot of gold to brahmanas. O king! If you donate gold, you will be freed from sins.”’

# Chapter 1767(86)

"Yudhishthira said, "The grandfather talked about the ordinances connected with gold and you have told me these. You have explained in detail the qualities and signs associated with donating it, as described in the sacred texts. You have also recounted the reason behind the origin of gold. But tell me how that Taraka met with his destruction. O king! You have said that he was unslayable, so far as the gods were concerned. However, you have not yet told me the details about his death. O extender of the Kuru lineage! I wish to hear the truth about that. Tell me everything about the slaying of Taraka. My curiosity is great."

'Bhishma replied, "O Indra among kings! The gods and the rishis thus faced distress. They urged the Krittikas to rear that divine offspring. Among the gods, there was no one who would have been able to rear Agni's embryo alone. It was too full of energy. However, Pavaka was pleased that each of the six had agreed to nurture the embryo. He released his own energy and the supreme seed. Each of the six Krittikas nurtured a part of Agni's embryo. O lord! Agni's energy was divided into six parts and all of them carried it together. The great-souled Kumara began to grow in this way. However, their limbs were overwhelmed with his energy and they could not find any peace. While their limbs were overwhelmed with this energy, the time for delivery arrived. O bull among men! All the Krittikas delivered at the same time. Though the six parts of the embryo had been delivered separately, they came together and united. The earth received him and placed him in a beautiful spot. The child was divine in form and blazed with the complexion of the fire. Having been placed in a divine clump of reeds, the one who was handsome in appearance began to grow. The Krittikas saw the child, who possessed the resplendence of the fire. Their affection and love was stirred and they nurtured him with milk from their breasts. That is the reason why, among the mobile and immobile objects of the three worlds, he came to be known as Kartikeya. Because the seed trickled down, he was known as Skanda. Because he was reared in secrecy, he was known as Guha. The thirty-three gods, the lords of the directions, Rudra, Dhatri, Vishnu, Yajna,[155] Pushan, Aryama, Bhaga, Amsha, Mitra, the Sadhyas, the Vasus, Vasava, the Ashvins, the water, the wind, the sky, the moon, the nakshatra, the planets, the sun and all the separate objects that are offered to the gods[156] went there to see Kumara, Agni's son. The rishis chanted words of praise and the gandharvas sang. Kumara possessed six faces and twelve eyes and loved brahmanas. His chest was broad and he possessed twelve arms. His radiance was like that of the fire and the sun. The gods and the rishis saw him, as he lay down on that clump of reeds. They were extremely delighted, thinking that the asura had already been killed. The gods brought everything that would bring him pleasure. Since he was still engaged in playing, they gave him dolls and a large number of birds. Suparna[157] gave him a feathered peacock with colourful plumage. The rakshasas gave him a boar and a buffalo. Varuna himself gave him a cock that was like the fire in complexion. The moon gave him a sheep and the sun gave him dazzling rays. The goddess who is the mother of cows[158] gave him hundreds and thousands of cattle. Agni gave him a goat that possessed many qualities and Ila gave him many flowers and fruit.[159] Sudhanva[160] gave him a cart and a chariot with a large frame. Varuna gave him many of Varuna's celestial objects and some sacred serpents. Indra of the gods gave him lions, tigers, leopards, many other carnivorous, predatory and

terrible beasts and diverse umbrellas. Large numbers of rakshasas and asuras began to follow the lord.

‘“On seeing the lord grow up, Taraka tried many kinds of methods to try and kill him. But he wasn’t successful. The gods honoured the one who had been reared secretly and made him their general. They also informed him about the depredations that had been caused by Taraka. The immensely valorous one, the general of the gods, grew up. With an invincible spear, Guha slew the danava Taraka. As he killed the asura, it was as if Kumara was playing. The lord again established Indra of the gods in the kingdom of the gods and he made the powerful Skanda the general. The lord[161] protected the gods and did what would bring Shankara pleasure. The illustrious Pavaki[162] is golden in form. Kumara has always remained the general of the gods. It is held that gold is Agni’s supreme energy, born with Kartikeya. That is the reason it is auspicious and is a supreme and indestructible jewel. O Kouravya! This is what Vasishtha told Rama in ancient times. O lord of men! Therefore, you should make efforts to donate gold. Having gifted gold, Rama was freed from all his sins. He obtained a great spot in heaven, which is extremely difficult for a man to obtain.”’

## Chapter 1768(87)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O one with dharma in his soul! O unblemished one! You have spoken to me about the dharma of the four varnas. O king! In that fashion, tell me everything about the rites to be followed in funeral ceremonies.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Thus addressed by Yudhishthira, Bhishma, Shantanu’s son, sought to explain to him everything about the rites to be followed in funeral ceremonies.

‘Bhishma replied, “O king! Listen attentively to the sacred rites that have been prescribed for funeral ceremonies. O scorcher of enemies! These sacrifices for the ancestors are praised and lead to fame and sons. Gods, asuras, humans, gandharvas, serpents, rakshasas, *pishachas* and kinnaras always worship their ancestors. The ancestors are worshipped first and the gods are satisfied next. Therefore, a man must undertake every kind of effort for such a sacrifice. O great king! It is said that a funeral ceremony for the ancestors can be undertaken later. But that general rule is countered by the rule that it must be performed first.[163] The grandfathers are pleased with a funeral ceremony that is performed on any day. But I will tell you about the qualities and demerits of specific tithis. O unblemished one! Funeral ceremonies performed on different days yield different fruits. I will tell you everything. Listen attentively. If one worships the ancestors on the first day of shuklapaksha, one obtains beautiful wives in one’s own house and they give birth to many beautiful sons. On the second day, one obtains daughters. On the third day, one obtains minstrels who praise. On the fourth day, one obtains many small animals in one’s house. O king! On the fifth day, many sons are born. A man who performs it on the sixth day gets radiance. O king! By performing a funeral ceremony on the seventh day, one gains through agriculture. By performing it on the eighth day, one gains through trade. By performing a funeral ceremony on the ninth day, one obtains many animals with uncloven hooves. By performing a funeral ceremony on the tenth day, the cattle prosper. O king! By performing it on the eleventh day, one obtains vessels made out of earth and base metals. Sons with the radiance of

Brahma's rays are born in the household. It is always seen in this world that if it is performed on the twelfth day, there are many colourful and beautiful objects of silver and gold. If a funeral ceremony is performed on the thirteenth day, one becomes superior to one's relatives. If a man performs a funeral ceremony on the fourteenth day, he has to take part in battles on earth. There is no doubt that the young men in his household will die. If it is done on the day of the new moon, all the objects of desire are satisfied. In krishnapaksha, it can be done from the tenth day onwards, but avoiding the fourteenth. The other tithis are not praised for funeral ceremonies. The subsequent paksha is superior to the earlier paksha.[164] For a funeral ceremony, the afternoon is also superior to the forenoon."'

## Chapter 1769(88)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O lord! Which is the object that, if donated to ancestors, becomes inexhaustible? What oblation lasts for many nights? Indeed, what is thought to last for an eternity?" 'Bhishma replied, "O Yudhishthira! Those who are learned about funeral ceremonies have thought of oblations for funeral ceremonies. Listen to the desirable fruits associated with each. O king! If sesamum, rice, barley, kidney beans, roots and fruits are given at funeral ceremonies, the ancestors are satisfied for a month. Manu has said that if a large quantity of sesamum is given at a funeral ceremony, it becomes inexhaustible. Among all the objects that are eaten, sesamum is said to be the best. When fish is offered, the large number of ancestors is satisfied for two months. Lamb is said to satisfy for three months and rabbit meat for four months. O king! With the meat of goats, the ancestors are delighted for five months. It is six months with the meat of boar and seven months with the flesh of birds. With the meat of *parshata,*[165] it is eight months. It is nine months with the meat of *ruru.* With the meat of *gavaya*,[166] they are content for ten months. With the meat of buffaloes, the ancestors are delighted for eleven months. If the product from a cow[167] is given at a funeral ceremony, the satisfaction is said to last for an entire year. The product from a cow can be mixed with payasam and ghee. With the flesh of *vardhinasa*,[168] the satisfaction lasts for twelve years. When the flesh of a rhinoceros is offered to the ancestors, the fruits are infinite and indestructible. The fruits of basil, the petals of the *kanchana* flower and goat meat are also said to be eternal. O Yudhishthira! In this connection, there are some hymns and chants sung by the ancestors. In earlier times, the illustrious Sanatkumara told me about these. 'In the month of Magha,[169] during *uttarayana*, on the thirteenth day, a person who has been born in our lineage must give us payasam mixed with ghee. When the nakshatra Magha is in the ascendant, he must observe the vows and offer us petals of the kanchana flower, with goat meat. When the nakshatra Hasta is in the ascendant,[170] he must offer this in accordance with the rites, using whisks made from the leaves of the Indian laburnum tree. Many sons are desired so that at least one of those can go to Gaya and render offerings at the banyan tree there, famous in the worlds as one that makes the fruits inexhaustible. On the anniversary of a father's death, even if a little bit of water, roots, fruits, meat and rice are offered, mixed with honey, that is thought of as becoming inexhaustible."'

## Chapter 1770(89)

‘Bhishma said, “Yama spoke about funeral ceremonies to Shashabindu.[171] Hear about the desirable acts under separate nakshatras. With his offspring, if a man always ignites the fire and performs a funeral ceremony at the conjunction of Krittika, he becomes devoid of anxiety. One who desires offspring should do it under Rohini. One who desires energy should do it under Mrigashira. If a man performs a funeral ceremony under Ardra, he becomes the perpetrator of cruel deeds. A mortal who performs a funeral ceremony under Punarvasu makes gains through agriculture. A man who desires prosperity should perform a funeral ceremony under Pushya. A person who performs a funeral ceremony under Ashlesha gives birth to brave sons. A person who performs a funeral ceremony under Magha becomes superior to the relatives. A person who performs a funeral ceremony under Purva Phalguni obtains good fortune. Uttara Phalguni leads to offspring. Hasta leads to fruits being obtained. If a person performs a funeral ceremony under Chitra, he obtains handsome sons. If a person worships the ancestors under the conjunction of Svati, he earns a living through trade. A man who desires many sons should worship the ancestors under Vishakha. If he does it under Anuradha, he becomes an emperor. O best among those of the Kuru lineage! If a mortal is devoted and self-controlled and does this under Jyeshtha, such a man avoids difficulties and becomes a sovereign. Under Mula, one recovers from disease. Under Purva Ashadha, one obtains excellent health. Under Uttara Ashadha, one roams around the earth, devoid of sorrow. A person who undertakes a funeral ceremony under Abhijit obtains supreme learning. If a person undertakes a funeral ceremony under Shravana, after death, he goes to the supreme destination. A man who does it under Dhanishtha obtains the status of getting a kingdom. If one does it under Varuna’s nakshatra,[172] one becomes successful as a physician. If one does it under Purva Proshthapada,[173] one obtains many goats and sheep. If one does it under Uttara Proshthapada, one obtains thousands of cattle. If one does it under Revati, one obtains the prosperity and wealth of a large amount of silver. If one does it under Ashvini, one obtains many horses. Under Bharani, one obtains an excellent lifespan. Having heard about these rites of funeral ceremonies, Shashabindu acted accordingly. He conquered the earth easily and ruled it.”’

## Chapter 1771(90)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O grandfather! O tiger among the Kurus! You should explain to me about the kinds of brahmanas who should get gifts at funeral ceremonies.”

‘Bhishma replied, “A kshatriya who knows about dana dharma must examine brahmanas. It has been said that in rites connected with the gods and the ancestors, one must lawfully undertake this scrutiny. When the gods are worshipped, it is the energy of the gods that is used. A man receives this and uses it to worship the gods. O great king! At a funeral ceremony, one must examine the brahmanas for lineage, conduct, age, beauty, learning and nobility. There are some who are polluted and tainted. Others purify taints. O king! Listen. I will recount the ones who should be barred from the

line[174]—one who is deceitful; one guilty of foeticide; one with tuberculosis; one engaged in animal husbandry; one who has not read the Vedas;[175] one who works as a servant in a village; one who lives on the interest of moneylending; one who is a singer; one who sells everything; an arsonist; a poisoner; a pimp; one who sells soma; a palmist; one who is the servant of a king; a seller of oil; a cheat; one who quarrels with his father; one who allows his wife's lover to dwell in his own house; one who has been cursed; a thief; one who earns a living as an artisan; one who sells baskets on festive occasions; one who injures his friends; one who has intercourse with someone else's wife; one who teaches those who don't observe vows; the husband of a courtesan;[176] one who roams around in the company of dogs; one who has been bitten by a dog; one who has married before his elder brother; a leper; one who has had intercourse with his preceptor's wife; an actor; one who makes a living off idols; and one who makes a living by studying the nakshatras. Know that such brahmanas are inferior and should not be allowed to sit in the same line. In addition, there are those of limited intelligence who offer instructions to shudras. O king! If they are seated alongside, the entire line is polluted. A one-eyed[177] person pollutes sixty,[178] an impotent person pollutes one hundred and one with white leprosy pollutes as many as he looks at. If a person eats[179] with his head covered in cloth, if he eats facing a southern direction, or if he eats with his footwear on, all the resultant learning is obtained by the asuras. If anything is given with malice and if anything is given without devotion, Brahma has thought of all of these as shares belonging to Indras among the asuras. The spot where funeral offerings are given should be surrounded and covered with sesamum seeds. Dogs and brahmanas who are not allowed to sit in the same line should not look at these. If this is not done, all the sesamum seed and oblations are stolen by predatory beasts, *krodavashas*, *yatudhanas* and pishachas.[180] If a brahmana is not allowed to sit and eat in the same line, but does it, then the fruits of the foolish donor are destroyed, proportionate to the number of individuals along the line that the offending brahmana looks at.

'"O best among the Bharata lineage! Know that these are the ones who sanctify the line.[181] I will tell you the truth about this. Examine brahmanas. All the brahmanas who possess learning about the Vedas and have bathed themselves in vows are ones who can eat in the same line. I will tell you about them. Know that they are the sanctifiers of the line—one who knows about the three Nachiketa fires;[182] one who knows about the five sacrificial fires; one who knows the three Suparnas;[183] one who knows the six Vedangas; one who is the descendant of ancestors who knew about the brahman; one who knows about metres; one who knows about Jyeshtha Sama;[184] one who is obedient to his mother and his father; one whose ancestors have been learned for ten generations; one who always has intercourse with his lawful wife when she is in season; one who is learned in the Vedas; and one who has bathed himself in vows. Such a brahmana deserves to sit in the line. A person who has studied *Atharvashirasa*,[185] a brahmachari, a person who is rigid in his vows, one who is truthful in speech, one who possesses dharma and good conduct, one who is devoted to his own tasks, one who has made the efforts to bathe in the sacred tirthas, one who has successfully bathed after having completed a sacrifice with mantras, one without anger, one who isn't fickle, one who is forgiving, one who is self-restrained, one who has conquered his senses and one who is engaged in the welfare of all beings—this is the kind of person who should be invited to a funeral ceremony. These are the ones who sanctify the line. If one donates to them, the fruits are inexhaustible. O great king! In addition, know

that there are others who also sanctify the line—ascetics, those who know about the dharma of moksha, those who follow the vows of yoga well, those who make efforts to make the best of brahmanas listen to *itihasa*, those who know about commentaries, those who are devoted to studying grammar, those who have studied the Puranas and the sacred texts of dharma, those who have studied *nyaya*, those who follow the rituals properly, those who have lived in the households of their preceptors, those who are truthful, those who have donated to thousands and those who are foremost in their knowledge of all the Vedas and all the aphorisms. They are the sanctifiers of the line. They are said to sanctify the line for as far as they can see. Learned ones who know about the brahman and are the descendants of those who know about the brahman sanctify for a distance of one-third of a *krosha*.[186] If a person is not an officiating priest or an instructor and takes the front seat, even if this is with the permission of the officiating priests, then he appropriates the evil deeds of all the people who are seated along that line. O king! However, if he is knowledgable about all the Vedas and is devoid of taints that cause pollution to the line, he is not regarded as fallen. He is one who sanctifies the line. Therefore, before inviting brahmanas, every effort must be made to examine them to see that they are engaged in their own tasks, are self-controlled, born in noble lineages and are extremely learned.

‘“A person who performs a funeral ceremony and primarily feeds the offerings to his friends does not please the ancestors and the gods. He does not go to heaven. If a person performs a funeral ceremony only for the purpose of getting some people together, he does not walk along the path of the gods. If a person performs a funeral ceremony for the sake of his friends, he is not freed from the bondage of the senses. He is dislodged from the world of heaven. Therefore, friends must not be honoured at funeral ceremonies. The stored riches can be given to them on other occasions. Food, havya and kavya should be offered to those who are neutrals, not to those who are thought of as enemies or friends. Seed that is sown on barren ground does not sprout. Nor does a person who hasn’t sowed, benefit from the sprouting of the seed. In that way, if undeserving people eat at a funeral ceremony, no fruits are obtained, in this world or in the next. A brahmana who doesn’t study is like a fire that is kindled with straw. It is pacified. Similarly, at a funeral ceremony, one shouldn’t give to the undeserving. That is like libations poured onto ashes. There is something named *sombhajani*.[187] That is like giving dakshina to pishachas. The gods or the ancestors do not receive anything from it. Instead, it[188] wanders around on earth, like a cow that has lost its calf and is wandering around from one pen to another, searching. The gods and the ancestors receive nothing, like ghee that has been poured into a fire that has been pacified. It is no different from dakshina given to dancers and actors, or to those who are inferior. When dakshina is given to an inferior person, both the donor and the recipient suffer. These are censured and lead to misfortune and downfall of the ancestors from their divine states. O Yudhishthira! The learned know that brahmanas are those who always follow the injunctions laid down by the rishis. They are certain in their knowledge of all kinds of dharma and the gods. They are devoted to studying. They are devoted to learning. They are devoted to austerities. They are devoted to rites. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They should be understood to be rishis. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! For benefit, the kavya should be given to those who are devoted to knowledge. Those brahmanas are supreme and should never be censured. Those who censure them and slander them should not be fed at funeral ceremonies. O king! A person who censures such brahmanas destroys three generations of his lineage. O king! This has been heard to be

the words of the Vaikhanasa rishis. Brahmanas should be examined from a distance to see whether they are learned about the Vedas. Whether one likes them or dislikes them, they are the ones who should be invited to a funeral ceremony. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is better for a man to cheerfully feed a single brahmana who knows about the mantras than thousands and thousands of inferior ones."'

## Chapter 1772(91)

'Yudhishthira asked, "Who thought of funeral rites and when? What is its essence? During the age of the Bhrigus and the Angirases, which sage thought of them? Which acts should be avoided at funeral ceremonies? What about roots and fruits? What kinds of paddy should not be used? O grandfather! Tell me this."

'Bhishma replied, "O lord of men! I will tell you about how funeral rites were started, when, by whom, and about their essence. Listen. O Kouravya! From Svayambhu was born the powerful and supreme rishi Atri. O great king! In his lineage was born the one known as Dattatreya. Dattatreya had a son named Nimi and he was rich in austerities. Nimi had a son named Shrimat and he was extremely handsome. He performed extremely difficult austerities for a full one thousand years. When this was completed, he succumbed to the dharma of time and died. Nimi performed the instructed rites of purification. However, overwhelmed by sorrow on account of his son, he suffered from severe torment. On the fourteenth lunar tithi, the immensely intelligent one brought together various ingredients. He was full of grief and slept during the night. With his mind still overcome with grief, he arose in the morning. He focused his mind and controlled his intelligence from wandering away. Having controlled himself, he conceived of funeral rites. He was rich in austerities. He mentally thought of food, roots and fruits and all the other objects that would bring benefit. On the day of the new moon, the immensely wise one invited some revered brahmanas. He himself made all of them sit down on mats of kusha grass and circumambulated them. He brought together seven such brahmanas and gave them food. The lord offered them *shyamaka* rice,[189] cooked without salt. Mats of darbha grass were spread out near the feet of the brahmanas, once they were seated, with the tips of the blades pointing to the south. They ate off these. Controlling himself, he spread out the darbha grass, with the tips of the blades pointing to the south. He then offered the funeral cakes to Shrimat, citing his name and gotra. Having done this, the best among sages confronted a conflict of dharma in his mind.[190] As he thought about it, he was tormented by repentance. 'What have I done? This has not been done by sages earlier. How can I avoid being scorched by the curses of brahmanas?' He thought about the original creator of his lineage. As soon as he thought of him, Atri, rich in austerities, arrived there.

'"On seeing that he was severely afflicted by grief on account of his son, the undecaying and eloquent Atri reassured him. 'O Nimi! O one who is rich in austerities! The sacrifice you have thought of is for the ancestors. Do not be anxious about this. Earlier, Brahma himself instructed that this is dharma. What you have thought of has been ordained by Svayambhu to be dharma. Who but Svayambhu could have laid down the ordinances for a funeral ceremony? I will again tell you about the supreme rites for a funeral ceremony. O son! These have been ordained by Svayambhu. Act in

accordance with those. Listen to me. O one rich in austerities! First, chant mantras and follow the rites for igniting the fire. Then always offer oblations to Aryama, Soma, Varuna, the Vishvadevas, the ancestors and all their respective domains. These shares have been thought of by Svayambhu himself. The earth is the one who sustains the oblations. Therefore, she must be praised as Vaishnavi, Kashyapi and the indestructible one. When water is brought, the lord Varuna must be praised. O unblemished one! After this, Agni and Soma must be invoked. The divinities known as the ancestors were created by Svayambhu. He also thought of shares for the extremely fortunate ones known as the Ushmapas.[191] If one worships them at funeral ceremonies, one is freed from sins. Earlier, Svayambhu instructed that there are seven generations of ancestors. I have enumerated the Vishvadevas earlier and they have Agni as their mouth. I will now recount the names of the great-souled ones who deserve to be given shares—Saha, Kriti, Vipapma, Punyakrit, Pavana, Gramni, Kshema, Samuha, Divyasanu, Vivasvat, Viryavat, Hrimat, Kirtimat, Krita, Vipurva, Somapurva, the one named Suryashri, Somapa, Suryasavitra, Dattatman, Pushkariyaka, Ushninabha, Nabhoda, Vishvayu, Dipti, Chamuhara, Suvesha, Vyomari, Shankara, Bhava, Isha, Kartri, Kritidaksha, Bhuvana, Divyakarmakrit, Ganita, Panchavirya, Aditya, Rashmimat, Saptakrit, Somavarcha, Vishvakri, Kavi, Anugopta, Sugopta, Napta, Ishvara, Jitatman, Munivirya, Diptalobha, Bhayamkara, Atikarma, Pratita, Pradata, Amshumat, Shailabha, Paramakrodhi, Dhiroshni, Bhupati, Sraji, Vraji, Vari and the eternal Vishvadevas. These immensely fortunate ones, who know about the progress and dominion of time, have been enumerated. The paddy known as *kodrava* and *pulaka*,[192] asafoetida mixed with the vegetables, onions and garlic should not be offered at funeral ceremonies. Nor should one use onions,[193] drumsticks, *grinjana*,[194] all varieties of pumpkins and bottle gourds, black salt, meat of domesticated pigs, the flesh of animals not killed at sacrifices, fennel, rock salt and *shitapaki*.[195] All objects that sprout and *shringatakas*[196] should be avoided. All kinds of salt and the *jamun* fruit must be avoided. Items on which tears and spit have fallen must not be offered at funeral ceremonies. Something that a dog has looked at must not be offered as havya and kavya. The ancestors and the gods are not pleased at such oblations. Some people should be barred from places where oblations are being offered—chandalas, shvapakas, those attired in yellowish-red garments, those with leprosy, those who are outcasts, those who have killed a brahmana, a brahmana born from an inferior lineage[197] and those who are the relatives of those who are outcasts. The learned shun their presence at funeral ceremonies.' In ancient times, having said this to the rishi who has descended from his own lineage, Atri, rich in austerities, left for the grandfather's divine assembly hall."'

## Chapter 1773(92)

'Bhishma said, "All the maharshis began to follow these rites and observing the rituals, began to undertake the indicated tasks at funeral ceremonies for the ancestors. The rishis always acted in accordance with dharma. Firm in their vows, after the ceremony, they started to offer water at the tirthas. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Satisfied with the oblations offered by the four varnas, the ancestors and the gods were content and began to eat the food. However, the gods and the ancestor suffered because the food wasn't digested. Afflicted by indigestion, they went to Soma. The ancestors,

suffering from indigestion, approached Soma and said, ‘We are oppressed because of this indigestion. Determine what is best for us.’ Desiring what was good for the gods, Soma replied, ‘Go to Svayambhu’s abode. He will determine what is best for you.’ O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Hearing Soma’s words, the gods and the ancestors went to the grandfather, who was seated on the summit of Meru. The ancestors said, ‘O illustrious one! We are suffering from not being able to digest the food. O god! Show us our favours and determine what will be good for us.’ Hearing their words, Svayambhu told the ones who were suffering from the excess. ‘This Agni is by my side. He will determine what is good for you.’ Agni said, ‘O fathers! When the oblations are presented before us, we will eat together. If you eat with me, there is no doubt that you will be able to digest the food.’ On hearing this, the anxiety of the ancestors was dispelled. O king! O bull among men! That is the reason why, when oblations are offered at funeral ceremonies, a share of the oblations is first offered to Agni. *Brahma-rakshasas*[198] are then unable to cause any harm at a funeral ceremony. Seeing that Agni is there, the rakshasas run away. The funeral cake must first be offered to the father and next to the paternal grandfather. It should then be offered to the paternal great grandfather. This is said to be the ritual connected with a funeral ceremony. While controlled, one must utter the *savitri* mantra over each funeral cake that is offered. One must also state that the soma is being offered for the sake of the ancestors. A woman who is in her season or a woman with mutilated ears should not be present at a funeral ceremony. Nor should a woman from some other family be present. When one traverses a body of water, one must mention the names of the ancestors. Having approached a river, one must offer oblations of water to the ancestors. Once one has offered oblations of water to those from one’s own family, one should then offer oblations of water to groups of well-wishers and relatives.[199] When one crosses a body of water on a cart that is yoked to two black[200] bulls, or astride a boat, the ancestors desire oblations. Those who know this, always offer water in a controlled way. The funeral ceremony must be performed in that half of the month that is krishnapaksha. If one is devoted to the ancestors, nourishment, long life, valour and prosperity follow. O best among those of the Kuru lineage! The grandfather, Pulastya, Vasishtha, Pulaha, Angiras, Kratu and the great rishi, Kashyapa—these are known as the great lords of yoga. These are also ancestors. O king! This is the supreme ritual of a funeral ceremony. Through the act of offering funeral cakes to the deceased relatives, they are freed. O best among men! I have thus told you how the funeral ceremony originated. It was established through the ancient ordinances. I will next tell you about donations.”’

## Chapter 1774(93)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O grandfather! There may be a brahmana who is observing a vow. If he is invited by another brahmana and eats the food offered as an oblation, what happens?”[201]

‘Bhishma replied, “If the vow is not in conformity with the Vedas, eating is not a perverse act. O Yudhishthira! However, if it is in conformity with the Vedas, he has deviated from his vow.”

‘Yudhishthira said, “There are some people who say that fasting is a vow. Is fasting really an austerity? Are there any other kinds of austerities?”

‘Bhishma replied, “People think that fasting for a month, or for half a month, is an austerity. However, a person who causes harm to his own body is not an ascetic. Nor does he know about dharma. Renunciation is excellent and has been said to be the supreme austerity. A brahmachari is a person who always fasts in that way. A brahmana must always behave like a sage and always perform sacrifices for the gods. O descendant of the Bharata lineage. Desiring dharma, he must always have a family and never sleep.[202] He must always subsist on amrita and always be pure. He must always be truthful in speech. He must always be self-restrained. He must always eat leftovers.[203] He must always be affectionate towards guests. He must never eat meat. He must always be pure.”

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O king! What is regarded as fasting and when is one a brahmachari? What does eating leftovers mean? How is one affectionate towards guests?”

‘Bhishma replied, “If a person eats in the morning and in the evening and never in the intervening period, he is regarded as a person who always fasts. A person who only has intercourse with his wife during her season is regarded as a brahmachari. So is a man who always speaks the truth and is generous in his conduct. By not eating the flesh of animals that should not be eaten, or of animals pointlessly killed,[204] one is regarded as a person who abstains from meat. A person who donates is pure. One who doesn’t sleep during the day is regarded as one who does not sleep. O Yudhishthira! Know this. If a man always eats what is left after the servants and the guests have eaten, he is a person who only subsists on amrita. If a person does not eat as long as brahmanas are unfed, he is regarded as someone who does not eat. He conquers heaven. If a person eats what is left after gods, ancestors, servants and guests have eaten, he is said to be a person who only eats leftovers. It is said that they obtain worlds all the way up to Brahma’s abode. O lord of men! The apsaras and the gandharvas attend to them there. They eat and find pleasure with the gods, the guests, the ancestors and their sons and grandsons there. This is their supreme destination.”’

## Chapter 1775(94)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “Many kinds of gifts are given to brahmanas. O grandfather! What are the special characteristics of the donor and the recipient?”

‘Bhishma replied, “A brahmana can accept a gift from a person who is virtuous and also from a person who is wicked. If the donor possesses the qualities, there is little sin in that. But if the donor doesn’t possess the qualities, the recipient is submerged. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Vrishadarbhi[205] and the *saptarshis*. Kashyapa, Atri, Vasishtha, Bharadvaja, Goutama, Vishvamitra, Jamadagni and the virtuous Arundhati[206] had a common female servant named Ganda. Her husband was the shudra Pashusakha. In ancient times, all of them performed austerities and wandered around the earth. Immersed in *samadhi*, they wished to see Brahma’s eternal world. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! There was a very long period of drought. The world was hungry and it became very difficult to remain alive. On an earlier occasion, a sacrifice had been performed by Shibi. As dakshina at that sacrifice, he had given away his own son to the officiating priest. O lord! This son was not destined to have a long life and he died at that time. Tormented by hunger, they sat around the dead body. The supreme rishis saw that the son

of the one who had performed the sacrifice was dead. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Afflicted by hunger, they placed the body on a plate and cooked it. There was no food available in the world of mortals. Desiring to save their lives and in search of a means of sustenance, those ascetics had to resort to this calamity. While they were cooking, the king was passing along that road. King Shaibhya, Vrishadarbha's son, was distressed to see this.

'"Vrishadarbhi said, 'If you accept a gift, you will be saved. For your sustenance, accept a gift. O ones rich in austerities! Listen. I will tell you about the riches I possess. I love brahmanas who seek gifts from me. I will give you one thousand mules. I will give each of you cows, with calves that have just been born. All of them will be swift, with white hair. I will give each of you one thousand bulls that are capable of bearing loads. They will be well born and auspicious. I will give you fat ones that can till the ground. I will give you well-behaved cows that have only had one calf. There are the best of villages that yield succulent grain. There are other jewels that are extremely difficult to obtain. What will I give you? Do not act so as to eat something that should not be eaten. For your sustenance, what can I give you?'

'"The rishis replied, 'O king! Receiving a gift from a king may seem to be sweet, but is like poison. Knowing this, why are you trying to tempt us? It is destiny that kshatriyas must seek refuge with brahmanas. Their austerities are unblemished. By pleasing them, the gods are pleased. A brahmana earns merits through days of austerities. If he accepts a gift from a king, those are destroyed, as in a forest conflagration. O king! May you always be fortunate, giving to those who solicit from you. Give them all those riches.'"

'Bhishma continued, "Having said this, all of them departed. The meat the intelligent ones had intended to prepare remained uncooked. Having abandoned it there, all of them left for the forest, wishing to search for food. Urged by the king, his ministers went to the forest. They plucked some figs and tried to give those away as donations. The servants filled the insides of some of those plucked figs with gold and tried to persuade them to accept these. Atri picked up some of those figs and found that they were heavy. He said, 'Do not take us to be fools. We are not evil in intelligence. We know there is gold in these. We know and are awake. If accepted in this world, they will lead to bitter results in the world hereafter. They should not be accepted by someone who desires happiness in this world and in the next.' Vasishtha said, 'One gold coin will be counted as one hundred, or even one thousand.[207] If we accept many, we will obtain the ends meant for the wicked.' Kashyapa said, 'All the paddy, barley, gold, animals and women on earth cannot satisfy one person's desire. Therefore, abandon greed and walk the path of peace.' Bharadvaja said, 'Once horns appear on a ruru deer, as the animal grows, they also grow. There is no limit to what a man wishes for.' Goutama said, 'All the objects in the world cannot fill up the world. A man is like an ocean. He can never be filled.' Vishvamitra said, 'When desire is satisfied, that only leads to another desire growing. The subsequent desire and thirst pierce like an arrow.' Jamadagni said, 'It is certain that self-restraint in not accepting sustains austerities. A brahmana's avarice for riches makes him deviate.' Arundhati said, 'It is the view of some that objects must be stored for the sake of dharma and artha. However, storing austerities is superior to storing objects.' Ganda said, 'My lords are fierce and they are frightened of this. They are stronger than me. I am weak. Therefore, I am even more terrified of this.' Pashusakha said, 'There is nothing superior to dharma and brahmanas know about that wealth. I humbly wait on

them, so that I may accurately get to know about that excellent learning.' The rishis said, 'Let him[208] keep his subjects happy through the gifts that he makes. Let him gift the stuffed fruits to them and not to us.' Having said this, they discarded the fruits that had gold inside them. Firm in their vows, all the rishis went off elsewhere. The ministers said, 'O king! You should know that suspecting that the fruits were stuffed, they have abandoned them and have gone elsewhere.' Thus addressed by his servants, Vrishadarbhi was enraged. Determined to take revenge on all of them, he went to his own house. Having gone there, he ignited a fire. Resorting to terrible rituals, he poured oblations into this. To satisfy his wishes, the king uttered well-pronounced mantras and offered oblations with each one of them. A demoness arose from the fire. She could strike terror in the worlds. Vrishadarbhi named her Yatudhani. The demoness was like the night of final destruction. With hands joined in salutation, she presented herself before King Vrishadarbhi and asked, 'What will I do?' Vrishadarbhi replied, 'Go to the seven rishis and Arundhati and also to their male servant and female servant. Find out their names and remember those in your mind.[209] Once you have found out their names, kill them all. Having destroyed them, you can go wherever you want.' Yatudhani agreed. She assumed her own form[210] and went to the forest where the maharshis were roaming around."'

## Chapter 1776(95)

'Bhishma said, "O king! The maharshis, with Atri as the foremost, were wandering around in the forest, eating roots and fruits. As they roamed around, they saw a mendicant named Shunasakha. His shoulders, hands, feet, mouth and stomach were plump and his limbs were stout. The beautiful Arundhati saw that all his limbs were well formed. She told the rishis, 'You are not like him. Nor will you ever be.' Vasishtha said, 'His agnihotra fire is not like ours. Morning and evening, he pours oblations into it, while we can't. That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Atri said, 'Unlike us, he doesn't suffer from hunger. He possesses vigour and control. Unlike ours, his learning hasn't been destroyed. That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Vishvamitra said, 'We are suffering from decay. Unlike us, he is able to sustain the eternal sacred texts. We have become lazy, overcome by hunger and stupid. That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Jamadagni said, 'Unlike us, he does not have to think at all about the annual store of food and kindling. That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Kashyapa said, 'Unlike us, he does not have four brothers who beg and solicit alms.[211] That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Bharadvaja said, 'Unlike us, he is devoted to the brahman. His consciousness is not clouded by grief because of the wife's recriminations.[212] That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' Goutama said, 'Unlike us, he is not clad in three pieces of kusha grass and one piece of *ranku*[213] hide. These are also three years old. That is the reason Shunasakha is stout.' On seeing the maharshis, the mendicant Shunasakha approached them. Observing the appropriate custom, he greeted them by touching their hands. They spoke to each other about how difficult it was to roam around in the forest, hunting for food. For some time, they remained together.

'"After this, they departed. They roamed around in the forest again, single-minded in their task of collecting roots and fruits. Once, as they were wandering around, they saw a beautiful lake that was full of lotuses. The banks were thick with rare trees. The water was pure and transparent. The lotuses

were beautiful in form, with complexions like that of the rising sun. The lake was covered with the petals of lotuses, with a complexion like that of lapis lazuli. There were many kinds of aquatic birds that lived in the water. There was a single path that led down to the water. It was easy of access and was free of mud. Engaged by Vrishadarbhi, the demoness known as Yatudhani, terrible to see, protected the lotuses. With Shunasakha to help them, the maharshis sought some lotus stalks. All of them wished to approach the lotuses, protected by the demoness. They saw Yatudhani, with a terrible visage. She was stationed on the banks of the lake. The maharshis addressed the demoness. 'Who are you, standing here alone? Who are you waiting for and what is your purpose? You are stationed on the banks of this lake. What do you wish to do?' Yatudhani replied, 'Whoever I might be, you should never question me. O ones rich in austerities! Know that I am the one who protects all the riches of this lake.' The rishis said, 'All of us are afflicted by hunger. We have been able to obtain nothing. With your permission, let all of us gather some lotus stalks.' Yatudhani replied, 'As long as there is a compact, you can gather lotus stalks as you wish. One after another, you must tell me your names. Without any delay, you can then gather the lotus-stalks.' Having told them that she was Yatudhani, the demoness wished to kill the rishis. Atri was overcome by hunger and spoke these words. 'I am the one who saves. I study thrice a day. There is no night during which I have not studied. O beautiful one! Know that this is the reason why my name is Atri.'[214] Yatudhani replied, 'O great sage! You have told me the truth about your name, though I am unable to comprehend the explanation. But you can descend into the lake.' Vasishtha said, 'I am Vasishtha. I am the foremost. I reside in wealth and houses. Know that since I am the foremost and since I reside, I am Vasishtha.'[215] Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Kashyapa said, 'I am the mooring for my lineage and I am radiant like the sun.[216] Since I come from Kashi, know that I am the brahmana who bears the name of Kashyapa.' Yatudhani replied, 'O great sage! You have told me the truth about your name, though I am unable to comprehend the explanation. But you can descend into the lake.' Bharadvaja said, 'O beautiful one! I support my sons.[217] I support my disciples. I support the gods. I support brahmanas. I support my wife. Since I do this easily, I am Bharadvaja.' Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Goutama said, 'O demoness! O Yatudhani! Listen to me. I have conquered the sky and earth through my self-restraint.[218] I travel using my self-restraint. I am like a fire without smoke. Because of my self-restraint, you will find it extremely difficult to look at me. Know me to be Goutama.' Yatudhani replied, 'O great sage! You have told me the truth about your name and I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Vishvamitra said, 'The gods of the universe are my friends.[219] The cattle are my friends. O Yatudhani! Listen to me. I am known as Vishvamitra.' Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Jamadagni said, 'O beautiful one! I have been born from the sacrifices of those who have no birth.[220] I provide inspiration because of my purity. Know that it is the view that I am Jamadagni.' Yatudhani replied, 'O great sage! You have told me the truth about your name and I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Arundhati said, 'I stand next to my husband and hold up the earth. My mind

gently follows my husband.[221] Therefore, know me to be Arundhati.' Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Ganda said, 'The side of my face has a lump.[222] I bear that mark of a lump on the cheek. O one who has been born from the fire! Because of the lump that stands out on my cheek, know me to Ganda.' Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Pashusakha said, 'O one who has been born from the fire! O friend! I am a friend to, and friendly towards, animals, especially towards cows.[223] Therefore, know me to be Pashusakha. Yatudhani replied, 'You have told me your name, though I am sorry that I cannot understand what you have said about the syllables. But I am incapable of barring you any more. Descend into the lake.' Shunasakha said, 'I am not interested in explaining my name the way they have done.[224] O Yatudhani! However, you should reflect on the fact that I am known by the name of Shunasakha.' Yatudhani replied, 'The words that you have spoken are not clear. Your words are ambiguous. O brahmana! Therefore, tell me your name properly.' Shunasakha said, 'I have told you my name properly, though you have been unable to grasp it. Therefore, I will strike you with my triple stick.[225] May you instantly be reduced to ashes.' That stick was like the curse of a brahmana. Struck by it on the head, the demoness fell down on the ground, reduced to ashes. Shunasakha thus slew the immensely strong Yatudhani.

'"Having done this, he stuck his triple staff on the ground and sat down on a grassy spot. As they wished, all the sages collected lotus stalks. Delighted, they then arose. Having collected bundles of lotus stalks, they were full of exhaustion. They flung these down on the banks and again entered the lake to offer oblations of water. O bull among men! Having arisen from the water, all of them looked around, but could no longer see the lotus stalks. The rishis said, 'We were overcome with hunger. Which wicked person has stolen what belongs to us? We desired to eat those lotus stalks. Who has acted in this cruel way?' Those bulls among brahmanas suspected each other and questioned each other. O afflicter of enemies! They told each other that all of them would have to swear an oath. When all of them said this, Shunasakha tried to restrain them. But they were hungry and exhausted and prepared to swear. Atri said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks touch cattle with his feet, urinate while facing the sun and study in a forbidden way.' Vasishtha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks not study, suffer affliction from dogs, live a life of mendicancy, slay his friends and those who seek refuge, earn a living through his daughter and seek riches from wicked people and thieves.' Kashyapa said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks gamble everywhere, destroy trust, bear false witness, eat the flesh of animals killed in vain, make unsuccessful donations and have intercourse with his wife during the day.' Bharadvaja said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks be addicted towards cruel adharma vis-à-vis women, relatives and cattle, let him defeat brahmanas, let him defy his preceptor and study the Rig Veda and the Yajur Veda and let him offer oblations into fires that are kindled with straw.' Jamadagni said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks release excrement into the water, kill milk-yielding cattle, indulge in sexual intercourse outside the season, be hated and have enemies, live off his wife, make friends with difficulty and become someone else's guest.'[226] Goutama said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks discard the Vedas after studying them, throw away the three sacrificial fires, sell soma, dwell in a

village that has a common well, and live with a brahmana who has a *vrishala* for his wife.' Vishvamitra said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks be faced with a situation where his seniors and servants are maintained by other people, though he is alive. Despite many children, let him not accomplish his purpose. Let him be an impure and crooked brahmana. Let him be insolent because of his prosperity. Let him have to till the soil and let him be malicious. During the rains, let him be a servant of the king. Let the thief be an officiating priest for someone who is not entitled to perform a sacrifice.' Arundhati said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks always cause grief to her mother-in-law and her husband. Let her be evil in intelligence. Let her eat the tasty food alone. In the midst of her family, at the end of the day, let her be made to eat only *saktu.* Despite giving birth to a brave son, let her be unfortunate.'[227] Ganda said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks always speak falsehoods and act against the virtuous. Let her have to bestow her daughter in marriage in exchange for a price. Let her eat the food she has cooked alone. Let her spend her life as a servant maid. Let her be destroyed because of her perverse deeds.' Pashusakha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotus stalks give birth to servants. Let him have worthless offspring. Let him never worship the gods.' Shunasakha responded, 'Let the person who has taken away the lotus stalks bestow his daughter in marriage on a revered brahmana who knows the metres and observes brahmacharya. Let him bathe after having studied the Atharva Veda.' The rishis replied, 'The oath you have taken is something desired by brahmanas. O Shunasakha! You must have stolen all our lotus stalks.' Shunasakha said, 'What you left here can no longer be seen. What you have said is true. I have done the deed. It isn't a lie. I have stolen the lotus stalks. While you looked on, I made the lotus stalks vanish. O illustrious ones! O unblemished ones! I did that to test you. I have come here to protect all of you. Yatudhani was an extremely angry demoness who desired to kill you. She was invoked by Vrishadarbhi. O ones rich in austerities! I have slain her. That evil and wicked one was generated from the fire, so as to cause injury to you. O brahmanas! That is the reason I have come here. Know me to be Vasava. Since you are without avarice, you have obtained the indestructible worlds that satisfy all the objects of desire. O brahmanas! Arise quickly from this spot and go there.' Thus addressed by Purandara, the maharshis were delighted. With Indra of the gods, all of them went to heaven. Those great-souled ones suffered hardships from supreme hunger. Yet, because they did not succumb to greed, they obtained heaven. In this way, those great-souled ones enjoyed many objects of pleasure. Therefore, in every situation, a man must abandon greed. O king! Lack of avarice is known as supreme dharma. If a man recites this account of good conduct in an assembly, he obtains a share of happiness and does not have to face difficulties. The ancestors, the rishis and the gods are pleased with him. After death, such a man obtains fame, dharma and artha."'

## Chapter 1777(96)

'Bhishma said, "In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about the oaths taken in the course of a visit to the tirthas. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! O great king! This is about what was done by rajarshis and brahmana rishis when there was a theft of lotuses. The rishis assembled on the western side of Prabhasa. Having assembled there, they consulted each other. They

decided that they would roam around, visiting all the sacred tirthas on earth. Having said this, all of them departed on that task. O king! There were Shukra, Angiras, the learned Kavi, Agastya, Narada, Parvata, Bhrigu, Vasishtha, Kashyapa, Goutama, Vishvamitra, Jamadagni, the rishi Galava, Ashtaka, Bharadvaja, Arundhati, the Valakhilyas, Shibi, Dilipa, Nahusha, Ambarisha, King Yayati, Dhundhumara and Puru. O Indra among men! Those great ones proceeded, placing Shatakratu, Vritra's slayer, at their head. Having visited all the tirthas, in the month of Magha, they went to the sacred tirtha of Koushiki. They had cleansed their sins after visiting all the tirthas. After this, they went to that extremely sacred lake that was Brahma's. They were like fires and they bathed in that tirtha of the gods. They then gathered lotus stalks and ate them. O king! Some of them extracted the stalks of lotuses. Other brahmanas extracted the roots of the lotuses.

'"However, they found that the lotuses uprooted by Agastya had been stolen by someone. Agastya, foremost among the rishis, spoke to them. 'Who has stolen my excellent lotuses? I suspect it must be one of you. Give my lotuses back. It is unworthy of you to steal my lotuses. I have heard that time destroys the strength of dharma. That time must have arrived and dharma's affliction is increasing. Before adharma increases further, I should quickly leave for the world of the hereafter. There will be a time when brahmanas will recite the Vedas in loud tones in the midst of villages, within the hearing of vrishalas. There will be a time when kings will conduct themselves according to adharma. I do not wish to see all that. Before all that happens, I will leave for the world of the hereafter. There will be a time when men will regard the superior, the middling and the inferior as the same. A great darkness will pervade everything. Before that happens, I wish to quickly leave for the world of the hereafter. There will be a time when strong mortals will oppress weaker ones. Before I see that, I wish to quickly leave for the world of the hereafter. I am not interested in seeing this state of affairs in the world of men.'

'"Thus addressed by the maharshi, the rishis replied, 'We have not stolen your lotuses. You should not suspect us in vain. O maharshi! We will take terrible oaths.' O Indra among men! Since the maharshis were certain that they had not dishonoured dharma, with the kings, and their sons and grandsons, one after another, they took these oaths. Bhrigu said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses abuse when he is censured, strike back when he is struck and let him eat the flesh from the backbones of animals.'[228] Vasishtha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses not be interested in studying, let him be surrounded by dogs and as a mendicant, let him live in a city.'[229] Kashyapa said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses sell merchandise everywhere, let him covet objects left in trust and let him bear false witness.' Goutama said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses live with insolence in his mind, let him earn a living through trade and tilling the ground and let him be malicious.' Angiras said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be impure and a crooked brahmana, let him be surrounded by dogs and let him not be freed from the sin of causing injury to brahmanas.' Dhundhumara said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be ungrateful towards his friends, let him be reborn to a shudra mother and let him eat the food alone.' Puru said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be a physician, let him be sustained by his wife and let him obtain a means of living through his father-in-law.' Dilipa said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses dwell in a village that has a common well, let him be the husband of a vrishala and let him go to the worlds meant for such people.' Shukra said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses eat flesh from

the backbones of animals, let him have intercourse during the day and let him become the servant of a king.' Jamadagni said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses study in a prohibited way, let his friends eat at his funeral ceremonies[230] and let shudras eat at his funeral ceremonies.' Shibi said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses die without having ignited the sacrificial fire, let there be impediments at his sacrifices and let him obstruct the ascetics.' Yayati said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be false to his vows and procreate through his wife when he wears matted hair and let him disrespect the Vedas.' Nahusha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be a householder who drives his guests away because he has initiated himself into the pursuit of desire, let him pass on learning to his servants.' Ambarisha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be extremely cruel and a follower of adharma in his treatment of women, relatives and cattle and let him disregard brahmanas.' Narada said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be ignorant, let his fire remain hidden, let him read the sacred texts in mispronounced tones, let him show disrespect to those who are superior.' Nabhaga said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses always utter falsehoods, let him quarrel with the virtuous, let him bestow his daughter for a price.' Kavi said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses strike a cow with his feet, let him urinate towards the sun, let him abandon those who seek refuge.' Vishvamitra said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be a servant to a king during a drought, let him act as an officiating priest to those who should not perform sacrifices.' Parvata said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses have lordship over a village, let him travel on vehicles drawn by asses, let him use dogs for a means of subsistence.' Bharadvaja said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses suffer all the sins committed by those who perform all the cruel and wicked acts, let him utter lies.' Ashtaka said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses become a king who is not accomplished in his wisdom and is wicked in conduct and addicted to desire, let him rule the earth in accordance with adharma.' Galava said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses be worse than a person who is a sinner, let him be a man who injures his own through his wicked deeds, let him boast about the gifts he has donated.' Arundhati said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses speak ill of her mother-in-law, let her harbour evil thoughts towards her husband, let her eat the tasty food alone.' The Valakhilyas said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses stand on one foot at the entrance to a village, seeking alms,[231] despite knowing about dharma, let him abandon dharma.' Pashusakha said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses become a brahmana who disregards the agnihotra fire and sleeps happily, let him adopt the life of a mendicant and yet be addicted to desire.' Surabhi said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses become a cow who, despite possessing her own calf, is milked by some other cow's calf, with the milk being placed in a brass vessel.' O Indra among Kouravas! In this way, they were ready to curse with too many different kinds of oaths.

'"The one with the thousand eyes, the king of the gods, was delighted. He glanced at the angry ones, foremost among brahmanas. The rishis were enraged and Maghavan told them what he thought. He spoke to the brahmana rishis, the devarshis and the *rajarshis*. O king! Hear from me.' Shakra said, 'Let the person who has stolen the lotuses bestow his daughter in marriage on a brahmana who knows about the metres, follows brahmacharya and has studied the Atharva Veda. Let the person who has stolen the lotuses become a person who has studied all the Vedas. Let him be pure in conduct and devoted to dharma. Let him go to Brahma's abode.' Agastya replied, 'O slayer of Bala! Instead of a curse, you have pronounced a benediction. Follow eternal dharma and return my lotuses.'[232] Indra

said, ‘O illustrious one! I did not steal the lotuses because of greed. You should not be angry at me. I stole them because I desired to hear about dharma. Dharma represents the essence of the sacred texts. Dharma is the bridge that leads to welfare. From the rishis, I have heard what is eternal, undecaying and everlasting. O supreme among sages! Take back the lotus stalks. O illustrious one! O unblemished one! You should forgive my transgression.’ Thus addressed by the great Indra, the extremely angry ascetic accepted the lotuses. The intelligent sage was pleased. Those residents of the forest visited tirthas again. They washed their bodies at those sacred tirthas. If a person reads this account on auspicious and festive days, his son will not be born stupid and wicked. He will never be touched by any anxiety or dirt. After death, he will be radiant and obtain excellence in heaven. These are the sacred texts followed by the rishis. O supreme among men! A person who follows these goes to Brahma’s undecaying world.”’

## Chapter 1778(97)

‘Yudhishthira said, “O bull among the Bharata lineage! In the dharma followed at funeral ceremonies, umbrellas and footwear are given. Who started this? How did this originate and why are these given? It isn’t just the dharma of funeral ceremonies. They are given on other auspicious occasions too. O king! I wish to hear the truth about this.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O king! Listen in detail to how the system of umbrellas and footwear started, about how it originated in this world and who started it. It became an everlasting practice for those who seek an auspicious end. O lord of men! I will tell you everything in detail. O lord of men! In this connection, listen to an ancient account. This is a conversation between Jamadagni and the great-souled Surya. O lord! In ancient times, the illustrious one used to play around with his bow himself. One after another, Bhargava would take aim and shoot his arrows. Renuka[233] would bring back all the ones that the blazingly energetic one shot. She would properly bring them back and return them to him. He would be pleased at the sound of the bowstring slapping against his palm and the sound of the arrows. He would cheerfully shoot them and she would bring them back. Once, it was the month of Jyeshtha[234] and the sun was in the middle of the sky. Having shot his arrows, the brahmana told Renuka, ‘O large-eyed one! Go and fetch the arrows that have been shot from the bow. O one with the beautiful brows! Bring them back, so that I can shoot them again.’ O lord of men! She left. But the beautiful one had to seek shade at the foot of a tree. There, her head and feet were scorched by the sun. The beautiful one spent some time there, but she feared that she would be cursed by her husband. The black-eyed one therefore began to collect the arrows again. The illustrious one collected the arrows and returned. But the one with the beautiful limbs was distressed and her feet suffered from the pain. Scared and trembling, she returned to her husband. The husband, the rishi, angrily spoke these words to the one with the beautiful face. ‘O Renuka! Why do you repeatedly take such a long time to return?’ Renuka replied, ‘O one rich in austerities! My head and feet are scorched. I suffer from the heat of the sun and have to seek shade at the foot of a tree. O brahmana! That is the reason I take a long time to return. O lord! O one rich in austerities! Knowing this, you shouldn’t be angry with me.’ Jamadagni said, ‘O Renuka! The one with the blazing rays has been the cause of your misery. Today, using the

blazing energy of my weapons and my arrows, I will destroy Surya.' He drew back his divine bow and picked up many arrows. He stood there, turning his face in the direction of the sun. O Kounteya! On seeing that he was ready to strike, Surya approached in the form of a brahmana and spoke these words. 'What crime has Surya committed against you? From the firmament, Surya scatters down his rays. The sun collects juices from the earth and showers them down in the form of rain. O brahmana! Food is generated from that and this brings happiness to humans. It has been read in the Vedas that food is life. O brahmana! Hidden in the clouds, the sun is surrounded by his rays and showers down rain on the seven *dvipas*. The herbs, the creepers, the leaves and the flowers result. O lord! It is through the rain that all the food is generated. Everything is sustained through food—the sacraments, beginning with birth, all the vows and rites, the donation of cows, marriages, the prosperous sacrifices, the donations and all the methods for the accumulation of wealth. O Bhargava! You know the truth about that. Everything that is pleasant and beautiful results from food. I am telling you what you already know. O brahmana! Everything that I am telling you is already known to you. O brahmana rishi! Be pacified. Why are you trying to bring Surya down?'"'

## Chapter 1779(98)

'Yudhishthira asked, "When the sun beseeched the supreme among sages, what did the immensely energetic Jamadagni do?"

'Bhishma replied, "O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Despite the supplication, the sage Jamadagni, the lord who was like the fire in his radiance, was not pacified. Surya again spoke to him in sweet words. O lord of the earth! In the form of the brahmana, he bowed his head down and joined his hands in salutation. 'O brahmana rishi! In his course, Surya is always moving. Since the sun is always moving forward, how will you strike one who is in motion?' Jamadagni replied, 'Through the sight of my knowledge, I know who you are. Whether you are stationary or mobile, it will be my task to teach you humility today. O sun! In the afternoon, you are stationary for a brief instant. O Surya! Without thinking about it, I will pierce you then.' Surya said, 'O brahmana rishi! O supreme among archers! There is no doubt that you know who I am. O illustrious one! Even if I have offended you, know that I have sought refuge with you.' At this, the illustrious Jamadagni laughed and spoke these words. 'O Surya! Since you have sought protection with me, you should not be frightened any more. If a person who has sought refuge with me is slain, that will cause a transgression of the uprightness of brahmanas, the stability of the earth, the mildness of the moon, the gravity of Varuna, the resplendence of the fire, the radiance of Meru and the heat of the sun. A person who kills a supplicant is like one who violates his preceptor's bed, kills a brahmana and drinks liquor. O son![235] Therefore, think of something against the heat. Let the paths of those who are oppressed by your rays become comfortable.' Having said this, the extender of the Bhrigu lineage was silent. Quickly, Surya gave him an umbrella and footwear. Surya said, 'O maharshi! Accept this umbrella as a helmet against my rays. Accept this footwear, made out of leather, for the protection of the feet. From this day, these will be known on earth as auspicious gifts and they will be regarded as supreme and indestructible.' Umbrellas and footwear were thus instituted by Surya. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In the

three worlds, they came to be known as auspicious. Therefore, excellent umbrellas and footwear must be given to brahmanas. This is extremely great dharma and one should not think about this. O foremost among the Bharata lineage! If a person gives a white umbrella with one hundred ribs to brahmanas, he obtains happiness after death. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Always honoured by brahmanas, apsaras and gods, he dwells in Shakra's world. O mighty-armed one! If a person gives footwear to brahmanas, *snatakas* and other brahmanas who are controlled and are being scorched, he obtains worlds that are revered by the gods. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! After death, he resides happily in Goloka. O best among the Bharata lineage! O supreme among the Bharata lineage! I have thus told you everything about the fruits from donating umbrellas and footwear."'

## Chapter 1780(99)

'Yudhishthira said, "O descendant of the Kuru lineage! O bull among the Bharata lineage! I wish to hear the truth about the fruits obtained from trees and ponds."

'Bhishma replied, "Land that is beautiful with forests, adorned with many kinds of colourful minerals and grows all kinds of seeds is said to be the best. Among fields, the one that have ponds are superior. I will progressively tell you about all kinds of waterbodies. I will tell you about the qualities associated with those who dig ponds. Those who create ponds are honoured everywhere in the three worlds. Even when dwelling with friends, in places that enhance friendship, it is best to dwell in houses that have ponds. Those lead to the greatest fame. To obtain the fruits of dharma, artha and kama, the learned say that it is best to dig a pond properly. A field with a pond is a great refuge. Four kinds of creatures are noticed near a pond.[236] When there are ponds in every direction, this brings supreme benefit. Gods, humans, gandharvas, ancestors, serpents, rakshasas and all mobile objects resort to waterbodies. Therefore, I will tell you about the qualities that are said to be associated with ponds. The rishis have spoken about these fruits being obtained. The learned have said that if one's pond has water when the rains are meagre, one obtains the fruits of an agnihotra. If one's pond has water during autumn, after death, one obtains the supreme fruits of donating one thousand cows. If one's pond has water during the cold season,[237] one obtains the fruits of performing a sacrifice where a lot of gold is donated. If one's pond has water during the winter, the learned have said that the fruits obtained are like those of an agnishtoma sacrifice. If one's well-contructed pond provides excellent refuge during the spring, the fruits obtained are those of an *atiratra* sacrifice. If one's pond has drinking water during the summer, the learned sages have said that the fruits are like those of a *vajapeya* sacrifice. A man whose wells and waterbodies are such that cattle can always find drinking water there, is virtuous and saves his entire lineage. If a person's pond is such that thirsty cows, animals, birds and humans find drinking water there, he obtains the fruits of *ashvamedha*. If everyone drinks water, bathes and rests in a person's pond, after death, he is thought of as obtaining everything infinite. O son! Water is extremely difficult to obtain, especially after death. Eternal pleasure results from offering water to drink. If a person remains awake and donates sesamum, water and a lamp, after death, with his relatives, he obtains bliss that is extremely difficult to get. O tiger among men! The giving of water is heavier than all gifts. It is superior to all gifts. Therefore, drinking water must

always be given. I have thus spoken to you about the supreme fruits associated with ponds. I will next tell you about the planting of trees. Among immobile objects six kinds of species are spoken about—trees, bushes, creepers, smaller creepers,[238] bamboos and grass. Among these different species, the planting of trees brings the greatest benefit. It brings fame in the world of men and leads to auspicious fruits in the hereafter. Such a person obtains a name in this world and greatness with the ancestors. He goes to the world of the gods and his name is never destroyed. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! A person who plants trees saves his lineage, both ancestors and descendants. Therefore, plant trees. There is no doubt that a person who plants trees will obtain sons. When he dies, he will obtain the undecaying world of heaven. There will be blossoming trees with large numbers of gods there. There will be fruits, with the ancestors. The trees there will honour him as a guest and offer him shade. The trees offer refuge to kinnaras, serpents, rakshasas, gods, gandharvas, humans and large numbers of rishis. They satisfy humans with their flowers and their fruit. If a person plants trees, those trees save him in the world hereafter, like a son. Therefore, a person who desires benefit must always dig ponds and plant trees. These will protect you, like sons. O son! This is said to be your dharma. If a person digs ponds and plants trees, he is like a brahmana who speaks the truth or performs desirable sacrifices. He will obtain greatness in heaven. Therefore, dig ponds and plant trees. This is like a sacrifice among all kinds of sacrifices. This is like always speaking the truth."'

## Chapter 1781(100)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O bull among the Bharata lineage! Tell me everything about the dharma associated with *garhasthya*. O king! What must a man do to obtain prosperity in this world?"

'Bhishma replied, "O lord of men! In this connection, there is an ancient account. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is about a conversation between Vasudeva and the earth. The powerful Vasudeva praised the goddess earth. O best among the Bharata lineage! He asked her what you have asked me.

'"'Vasudeva said, 'Having resorted to the dharma of garhasthya, what acts should I undertake? O earth! What are the necessary tasks? Which acts bring happiness?'

'"'The earth replied, 'Rishis, ancestors, gods and humans must be worshipped through sacrifices. O Madhava! Listen to me. The gods are always satisfied with sacrifices and humans with hospitality. One must always warmly give them what deserves to be given. O Madhusudana! The large number of rishis is also delighted with this. Before eating, the householder must always tend to the sacrificial fire and offer the oblations. O Madhusudana! The gods are pleased through these acts. For the sake of pleasing the ancestors, every day, he must perform the funeral rites of offering food, water, roots and fruits. After having followed the prescribed ordinances and ignited the fire, one must offer cooked food to the Vishvadevas. This must be offered to Agni, Soma and the Vishvadevas, and thereafter, to Yama. Separate oblations are recommended for the Prajapatis. The oblations must be offered in the due order. For Yama it is to the south, for Varuna it is to the west, for Soma it is to the north and for brahmanas, it is in the centre of the house. O Madhava! For Dhanvantari it is to the north-east and for Shakra it is to the east. It is said that men must be given offerings at the gate of the house. In the

interior of the house, it is only the Maruts and the gods who can be given offerings. The Vishvadevas should be given offerings under the open sky. The ones who roam during the night and ghosts must be given offerings at night. After these offerings have been properly rendered, alms must be given to brahmanas. If no brahmanas are present, the first share of the offerings must be flung into the fire. If a man wishes to donate at a funeral ceremony for the ancestors, there are rites he must perform after the funeral ceremony has been concluded. Following the ordinances, the ancestors must be satisfied with the offerings. It is the turn of the Vishvadevas next. Thereafter, the brahmanas must be invited. The guests must next be served the food that is left. O great king! When they are first honoured, men are pleased. A guest is said to be a person who stays for a short period of time. A man must always submit to a preceptor, a father, a friend and a guest, "This is what is available in my house today." A person who says this and does this is said to follow dharma. O Krishna! A man who is a virtuous householder must always eat what is left after this. Even if they reside in his house for an entire year, a man must honour and satisfy a king, an officiating priest, a snataka, a preceptor and a father-in-law with *madhuparka*. In the morning and in the evening, it is recommended that food must be placed on the ground for dogs, *shvapakas* and birds. This is known as an offering to the Vishvadevas. This is said to be dharma for a person who follows garhasthya. Without any malice, one must act in this way. One will then obtain supreme prosperity in this world. After death, one will obtain greatness in the vault of heaven.' Hearing the earth's words, the powerful Vasudeva always acted in this way. You should also act accordingly. O lord of men! By following the dharma of a householder, you will obtain fame in this world and heaven after death."'

## Chapter 1782(101)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O bull among the Bharata lineage! What is the one that is known as the donation of lamps? How did it originate and what are its fruits? Tell me about this."

'Bhishma replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Prajapati Manu and Suvarna. There was an ascetic who was known by the name of Suvarna. His complexion was golden. That is the reason he was known as Suvarna.[239] He possessed the qualities of noble lineage and good conduct. He was supremely devoted to studying. Through his own qualities, he surpassed many who were descended from excellent lineages. On one occasion, the brahmana saw Manu wandering around. They asked each other questions about their respective well-beings. Resolved to obtain success, they sat down together on the mountainous slopes of the golden mountain of Meru. Seated there, they conversed with each other on various topics—the brahmana rishis, the gods, the daityas and the ancient great-souled ones. Suvarna spoke these words to the lord, Svayambhu Manu. 'For the welfare of all beings, you should answer my question. O lord of the subjects! There are many beautiful objects that are offered to the gods. How did this originate and what are the fruits that result? Please instruct me about this.'

'"Manu replied, 'In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Shukra and Bali when they met. Bali, Virochana's son, ruled the three worlds. He quickly approached Shukra, the extender of the Bhrigu lineage. The lord of the asuras honoured Bhargava with arghya

and after he had sat down, seated himself. In the proper way, he then offered him a large quantity of dakshina. They then conversed about what you have spoken about, about the fruits of donating beautiful objects like incense and lamps. The Indra among the daityas asked the Indra among wise ones this supreme question. “O supreme among those who know about the brahman! What are the fruits from donating beautiful objects like incense and lamps? O foremost among brahmanas! You should tell me this.”

‘“‘Shukra said, “Austerities were created first and dharma evolved after that. During the intervening period, creepers and herbs were generated. They had soma as their essence and many of these were created on earth. Some of this species were like amrita, while others were like poison. There were others that were neither. Amrita instantly provided pleasure and nourishment to the mind. The terrible stench of poison makes the mind suffer in every way. Know that amrita is auspicious and poison is extremely inauspicious. All the herbs constitute amrita. The energy of poison is generated from the fire. Whatever delights the mind is beneficial. That is the reason men who are performers of good deeds describe them as beautiful. A pure man gives the gods these beautiful objects. Whatever satisfies the gods is said to be beautiful. O lord! O king of the daityas! When a person gives beautiful objects to the gods, with an auspicious end in mind, they are pleased with him. Herbs possess many kinds of valour and have many different forms. It should be known that they have separate categories of fierce, mild and energetic. There are trees that can be used at sacrifices and those that should not be used at sacrifices. Listen to me. There are garlands that ensure welfare for the asuras and for the gods. I will progressively tell you what is loved by rakshasas, gods, *yakshas,* ancestors and humans and what ensures benefit. There are those[240] that are wild, those that naturally grow in villages, those that have to be cultivated, those that are grown in mountainous regions, those with thorns, those without thorns and those that have fragrance, beauty and taste. The scent of flowers is said to be of two types —agreeable and disagreeable. Flowers with an agreeable fragrance must be offered to the gods. O lord! The gods always desire flowers that come from trees without thorns and those that are generally white in complexion. A person who knows about donations should give garlands of aquatic flowers, lotuses and the like, to gandharvas, serpents and yakshas. Flowers which are extremely difficult to touch, those with thorns and those that are mostly red or black, must be offered to creatures that are fierce in their valour.[241] O lord! It has been said that beautiful and agreeable flowers, those that delight the mind and are sweet when crushed, should be offered to humans. Flowers that have grown in cremation grounds or temples should not be used in any activity that involves nourishment, such as marriages or secret pleasures. Mild flowers from slopes of mountains should be offered to the gods. Following the ordinances of the sacred texts, mild flowers that have grown and have been plucked properly can be offered. They please gods with their fragrance, yakshas and rakshasas with their sight and serpents with their touch. Men are pleased in all three ways. Gods are pleased instantly. They are capable of satisfying all the desires and wishes of mortals. When the gods are pleased, they always honour those who revere them. When they are ignored and disrespected, they destroy those inferior men. I will now tell you the fruits from offering incense. There are many kinds of incense—good and bad. Listen to me. There are three kinds—extractions, wood that naturally burns and incense that is artificially created. There are auspicious and inauspicious fragrances. Listen in detail. With the exception of *sallaki*,[242] all extractions can be given to the gods. It is certain that *guggulu*[243] is the best

among these. *Aguru*[244] is the best among extractions and is desired by yakshas, rakshasas and serpents. The daityas love sallaki and such similar extractions. O king! Fragrances from *sarja*[245] and the essence of similar wood, mixed with the fermented juice of sugar cane are recommended for men. The gods, the danavas and demons are said to be instantly satisfied. Men are said to use these[246] for pleasure. These are the qualities and reasons why these beautiful objects are said to be given. These different kinds of incense lead to an enhancement of pleasure. I will tell you about the supreme fruits associated with giving lamps—whom these lamps should be given to, when, and in what form. Light is a manifestation of energy and it is described as moving upwards. Therefore, when energy is given, it increases the energy of men. *Dakshinayana* is mixed with a period of intense darkness. Therefore, the donation of lamps is praised during uttarayana.[247] Light moves upwards and it is an antidote to darkness. Therefore, it has been determined as something that moves upwards. It is because of light that the gods are energetic, powerful and radiant. Rakshasas obtain these through darkness. Thus, lamps should be given. Through giving light, a man obtains the radiance of eyesight. Such a donor should not be injured and the lamp must not be stolen or destroyed. A person who steals a lamp becomes blind. He is shrouded in darkness and loses his radiance. The donor of a lamp goes to heaven and is surrounded by an array of lights there. The best lamps are those in which ghee is burnt. Next are those in which the juices of herbs[248] are burnt. A person who desires prosperity must never give a lamp in which the essence of fat, marrow and bones is being burnt. A person who desires his own prosperity must always place lamps on the slopes of mountains, along deserted roads, near sanctuaries and crossroads. A man who gives lamps always saves his lineage and purifies his soul. He becomes radiant and obtains the world of the stellar bodies. I will tell you about the qualities and fruits associated with rendering offerings to gods, yakshas, serpents, men, ghosts and rakshasas. Know that rakshasas are those who eat first, without feeding brahmanas, gods, guests and children. They are inauspicious and do not pronounce vashatkara. Therefore, one must single-mindedly bow one's head down and respectfully first render offerings to the gods. The gods accept these and always praise the house. It is through such offerings that brahmanas, other guests, yakshas, rakshasas, serpents, gods and ancestors are sustained. When they are gratified, they please the offerer with a long life, fame and riches. Along with the offerings, flowers, curds and well-cooked food, auspicious, fragrant and agreeable to see, must be rendered to the gods. Offerings made to yakshas and rakshasas must have blood and meat, mixed with liquor[249] and decorated with parched rice. What is given to the serpents must always be mixed with lotuses. The ghosts accept sesamum seed and molasses. Someone who eats only after honouring the gods with a first share becomes strong and noble. Therefore, they must be given an offering first. One's house is radiant because of the gods who are present in the house. For the sake of prosperity, one must worship them and give them the first share."'"

'Bhishma continued, "This is what Kavya Bhargava told the Indra among the asuras. Manu told Suvarna this and Suvarna told Narada. O immensely radiant one! Narada told me about these qualities. O son! Therefore, you should also follow all these kinds of conduct."'

## Chapter 1783(102)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O best among the Bharata lineage! I have heard about giving flowers, incense and offerings, about the rites to be followed and the fruits. However, you should tell me about this again. What are the fruits from giving incense and lamps? Why do householders hurl offerings down?”[250]

‘Bhishma replied, “In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Nahusha and Agastya and Bhrigu. O great king! Rajarshi Nahusha was an extremely great ascetic. Through his excellent and good deeds, he obtained the kingdom of heaven. O king! Though Nahusha went to heaven and resided there, he performed many kinds of human and divine rites. O king! Though the great-souled one was in heaven, he performed all the human rites and the eternal divine ones. He ignited the fire, collected kindling, kusha grass and agreeable objects. He made offerings of food, parched grain, incense and lamps. All of these continued to be practised in the great-souled king’s house. Though he dwelt in heaven, he performed the sacrifice of meditation and the sacrifice of mental control. The lord of the gods[251] worshipped all the gods in the proper way. O scorcher of enemies! He continued to do everything in the indicated way, just as he had done earlier. But after some time, the fact of having become Indra, led to insolence penetrating him. O king! He ignored all the rites and began to suffer. Intoxicated at having been granted a boon,[252] he made the rishis carry him. Since his observance of the rites had diminished, he also became weak. When it was time for the foremost among sages, stores of austeries, to bear him, he became overcome with a great deal of insolence. One after another, the rishis carried him. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It was then time for Agastya to bear him. At that time, the immensely energetic Bhrigu, supreme among those who knew about the brahman, had gone there. He reached Agastya’s hermitage and asked, ‘O great sage! Why do we have to tolerate Nahusha? Since he has become Indra of the gods, the evil-minded one shows us disrespect.’

‘“Agastya replied, ‘O great sage! How can I curse him? You know that the granter of boons has given him a boon. When he arrived in heaven, he asked for a boon from that god. “Anyone that my eyes turn towards will come under my subjugation.” This boon was granted. Therefore, there is no doubt that I won’t be able to burn him down. That is also the reason why the other supreme rishis have not been able to curse him or bring him down. O lord! In earlier times, the great-souled gave him amrita to drink. That is the reason we can’t bring him down. It is evident that the god has granted this boon to cause misery to all beings. That is the reason the worst among men displays this adharma towards brahmanas. O supreme among eloquent ones! The time has arrived. Tell me what should be done. All of us will act exactly as you tell us to.’

‘“Bhrigu said, ‘I have come here because I have been asked to do so by the grandfather. This is to counter Nahusha’s strength and insolence. Today, the extremely evil-minded king of the gods will yoke you to his chariot. Today, I will use my energy to uproot him from the status of Indra. Behold. Today, I will establish Shatakratu as Indra again. That extremely evil-minded and wicked person will be dislodged from his status as Indra. Today, the evil Indra of the gods will strike you with his foot. His consciousness will be affected by destiny and that evil-minded one will destroy himself. He will transgress dharma and I will thus be able to strike the one who causes the injury. O best among brahmanas! In my anger, I will curse him, “May you become a snake.” I will thus shame that extremely evil-minded one. O great sage! While you look on, I will bring him down to earth. Nahusha

is the performer of wicked deeds. He is intoxicated because of his prosperity and strength. O sage! If it pleases you, I will act in this way.'"

'Bhishma continued, "Thus addressed by Bhrigu, the undecaying son of Mitravaruna, Agastya, was extremely pleased and his anxiety was dispelled."'

## Chapter 1784(103)

'Yudhishthira asked, "How did he face a calamity and how was he brought down on the ground? How did he lose his status of Indra? You should tell me about this."

'Bhishma replied, "Those two great-souled ones conversed about what they should do. I have told you everything about how humans go to heaven. In that way, the great-souled one became the king of the gods by giving lamps and all the other required objects, observing all the rites for rendering offerings and performing all the other separate tasks that are meant for auspicious days. O Indra among kings! The learned say that in the world of the gods and in the world of men, a householder who practises good conduct obtains prosperity. This is through offering incense and lamps and prostrations. When food is cooked, the first share must be offered to brahmanas. When offerings are rendered to gods who reside in the house, they are pleased. The householder obtains satisfaction by rendering such offerings. However, through such an act, the gods are pleased a hundred times more. This is also the way virtuous people give incense and lamps, prostrating themselves. Such acts are praised and possess many qualities. After bowing down, learned people perform many acts of ablutions and these please the gods. When they are worshipped in accordance with the rites, the gods accept the offerings and are delighted. This is the kind of intelligence Nahusha, lord of men, resorted to. Having performed these wonderful rites, he obtained the great status of Indra of the gods. But after some time, his good fortune started to decline. He no longer followed all the rites and started to ignore them. The Indra among the gods was negligent in observing the rendering of offerings and in following the ordinances and giving incense, lamps and water. The rakshasas started to obstruct his sacrificial rites.

'"He yoked Agastya, foremost among rishis, to his vehicle. The immensely strong one smiled and instructed that the vehicle should be swiftly conveyed from the banks of the Sarasvati. The immensely energetic Bhrigu spoke to the son of Mitravaruna. 'Until I have entered your matted hair, do not shut your eyes.' While he entered the matted hair, the undecaying one[253] stood immobile. The immensely energetic Bhrigu prepared to bring the king down. The king of the gods approached the rishi and the vehicle. O lord of the earth! Agastya spoke these words to the lord of the gods. 'O Indra! Yoke me swiftly. What region will I bear you to? O lord of the gods! I will convey you wherever you tell me to.' Thus addressed, Nahusha yoked the sage. Bhrigu, who was inside the matted hair, became extremely delighted. However, Bhrigu took care not to look at the great-souled Nahusha, since he knew about the power that the boon had given him. Though he was yoked by Nahusha, Agastya did not display any rage. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The king struck him with a goad. But even then, the one with dharma in his soul wasn't angered. The king of the gods then angrily kicked Agastya on the head with his left foot. Bhrigu was inside the matted hair. When the head was thus

struck, the powerful one angrily cursed Nahusha, evil in his intelligence. Bhrigu said, 'In your rage, you have kicked the head of this great sage. O extremely evil-minded one! Therefore, you will quickly fall down on earth and become a snake.' O bull among the Bharata lineage! As soon as he said this, he[254] became a snake and fell down on earth, on the surface of the ground. This was done by Bhrigu, who had not looked at him. O lord of the earth! Had Nahusha been able to see Bhrigu, he wouldn't have been able to use his energy to bring him down. O great king! However, because of his gifts, austerities and rituals, though he fell down on the ground, he still retained his memory. To bring an end to the curse, he sought to pacify Bhrigu. O great king! He[255] felt compassion and sought to bring an end to the curse. Bhrigu said, 'There will be a king named Yudhishthira, an extender of the Kuru lineage. He will free you from the curse.' Saying this, he vanished.

'"The immensely energetic Agastya thus accomplished Shatakratu's purpose. Worshipped by the brahmanas, he returned to his own hermitage. O king! You have saved Nahusha from that curse. O lord of men! While you looked on, he went to Brahma's abode. Bhrigu thus brought Nahusha down to earth and went to Brahma's abode and told Brahma what had happened. The grandfather summoned Shakra and the gods. 'O gods! It is because of my boon that Nahusha obtained this kingdom. However, because of Agastya's anger, he has been dislodged and has gone to earth. The gods are incapable of continuing without a king. Therefore, again consecrate Shakra in the kingdom of heaven.' O Partha! The gods were thus addressed by the grandfather. Cheerfully, they replied to the grandfather that it would be that way. The illustrious Vasava was consecrated in the kingdom of heaven by Brahma and conducted himself as earlier. O tiger among kings! This is the ancient account about Nahusha's transgression. But because of his deeds, Nahusha regained his success. Therefore, in the evening, a householder must offer lamps. After death, a person who gives lamps obtains divine eyesight. The donor of a lamp becomes like the full moon in his resplendence. A man who gives a lamp obtains beauty and riches for as many years as the number of *nimeshas*[256] for which the lamp is ablaze."'

## Chapter 1785(104)

'Yudhishthira asked, "There are wicked and foolish men who perform cruel deeds and steal the possessions of brahmanas.

Where do they go?"

'Bhishma replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between a chandala and a *kshatrabandhu*.[257]

'"The king said, 'O chandala! You have the form of an aged person, but your behaviour is like that of a child. Your body is covered with dust created by dogs and asses, but you are concerned with what has come from cows. Tasks censured by the righteous are recommended for chandalas. Why are you using water from the tank to wash off only the dust that has been raised by cattle?'

'"The chandala replied, 'O king! Earlier, cows that belonged to a brahmana were stolen and in the process, they raised some dust and this descended on some *soma* plants. Brahmanas who drank this soma and the king who had initiated himself into the sacrifice were swiftly submerged in hell, with the

officiating priests, since all of them had appropriated something that belonged to a brahmana. Men who partook of the milk, ghee and curds,[258] all the brahmanas and all the kings, were submerged in hell. When they shook their bodies, with the milk, they slew the sons and the grandsons.[259] Though the couple[260] was virtuous in conduct, because they had looked at the animals, they were killed. O king! I used to reside there, as a brahmachari who had conquered his senses. O lord of men! The food I had obtained as alms got sprinkled with the dust. O king! Having eaten that, when I died, I became a chandala. The king who stole the brahmana's possessions came to an inglorious end. Therefore, under no circumstances, should one steal a brahmana's possessions. I only ate food that was sprinkled with a brahmana's dust. Look at what has happened to me. That is the reason a learned person must never sell soma. Learned people censure those who sell soma. O king! When they reach Vaivasvata's body, all the people who sell it or buy it go to *rourava*.[261] Even if a person is learned and ignorantly sells dust that has been laced with soma, he is destroyed and, for a long period of time, is reborn as a person who lives off lending money and usury. He goes to hell three hundred times and subsists on the excrement of dogs, in the companionship of dogs. If excessive insolence and transgression of a friend's wife are weighed on both sides of a balance, excessive insolence is heavier. Look at this wicked dog. It is light brown and thin. It is through excessive insolence that beings attain such an end.[262] I was born in a large and prosperous family. O lord! In that other life, I was accomplished in jnana and vijnana. I knew that sins would lead to destruction. But I showed by anger towards beings and ate the flesh from the backbones. I displayed that kind of conduct and ate that kind of food. That is the reason I have come to this present state. Behold the progress of time. I am like a person whose clothes have caught fire at one end, or like one who is pursued by bees. Look at me. I am agitated and covered with dust and am running away. Those who are householders can overcome great sins through studying. In addition, there are donations. That is what the learned ones have said. O lord of the earth! If it is a brahmana who has committed sinful deeds, he must go to a hermitage and free himself from all attachments and desire. O bull among kshatriyas! I have now been born in a wicked lineage. I am not certain about how I can liberate myself. Because of some good deeds that I performed then, I have not lost my memory. O king! I wish to be emancipated. I am seeking refuge with you and asking you. Dispel my doubt. O excellent one! How can I free myself from this state of being a chandala?'

'"The king said, 'O chandala! Know about how you can be freed. If you cast aside your life for the sake of a brahmana, you will obtain what is desirable. To ensure the welfare of brahmanas, give up your body in the field of battle, or before predatory beasts. If you offer your life as an oblation, you will be freed. There is no other means for your liberation.'"

'Bhishma continued, "O king! O scorcher of enemies! Thus addressed, to protect the possessions of a brahmana, in the field of battle, he offered his life as an oblation, thus attaining a desirable end. O son! O bull among the Bharata lineage! O mighty-armed one! Therefore, if you desire the supreme end, always protect the possessions of brahmanas."'

# Chapter 1786(105)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O grandfather! It has been said that all the performers of good deeds obtain an identical world. O grandfather! Or are there many worlds? Tell me this.”

‘Bhishma said, “O Partha! Because of their deeds, men go to many different worlds. People with good deeds go to worlds meant for the virtuous and those with bad deeds go to places meant for the wicked. O son! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between the sage Goutama and Vasava. There was a brahmana named Goutama. He was mild and self-controlled and had conquered his senses. In a great forest, he saw a baby elephant that was distressed because it had lost its mother. The one who was firm in his vows was overtaken by compassion. On seeing it, he nurtured it. After a long period of time, it became large and extremely strong. It was a giant elephant with shattered temples, exuding musth everywhere. Assuming the form of Dhritarashtra,[263] Shakra seized the elephant. Goutama, firm in his vows, saw that it was being dragged away. The immensely ascetic one spoke to King Dhritarashtra. ‘O Dhritarashtra! Do not be ungrateful and seize this elephant. It is my son and I have nurtured it with difficulty. The virtuous say that one becomes a friend after taking seven steps together.[264] O king! Let the sin of having injured a friend not touch you. It fetches me water and kindling. It protects my hermitage when I am away. It is humble towards the family of its preceptor. It is engaged in the tasks of its preceptor. It is mild, restrained and grateful. I have always cherished it. O king! Ignoring my protestations, you should not take this elephant away.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘I will give you one thousand cows, one hundred female servants and five hundred gold coins. O maharshi! I will give you many other kinds of riches. What will a brahmana do with an elephant?’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘O king! Keep your cows, female servants, gold coins and many other jewels. O Indra among men![265] Keep your diverse riches. What will a brahmana do with wealth?’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘What will brahmanas do with elephants? O brahmana! The race of elephants is meant for kings. I am taking this best of elephants away as my mount and there is no adharma in this. O Goutama! Do not obstruct me.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘After death, the virtuous rejoice in a world. After death, the wicked sorrow in another world. O great-souled one! I will follow you to those worlds in Vaivasvata’s abode to try and bring this elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are those who lack faith and belief and do not follow rites. They are evil in soul and are addicted to satisfying the senses. They suffer misery in Yama’s abode. Dhritarashtra will go to a supreme region and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘In Vaivasvata’s world, people are controlled. There is truth there and no falsehood is uttered. The weak can oppress the strong there. I will follow you there and try to bring this elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are worlds for those who are proud and do not follow the ordinances in their behaviour towards their elder sisters, fathers, mothers and preceptors. O maharshi! Dhritarashtra will go to a supreme region and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘King Vaishravana’s[266] dominion is Mandakini. It yields great objects of pleasure and is entered by those who are entitled to enjoy pleasure. There are large numbers of gandharvas, yakshas and apsaras there. I will follow you there and try to bring this elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are people who are excellent in their vows and follow the vow of tending to their guests. They give what they have pledged to brahmanas. They eat what is left after giving the others their shares. They obtain adornments in Mandakini.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There is a beautiful forest on the summit of Meru. It has excellent flowers and rings with the songs of kinnaras. There are beautiful and large *jambu*[267] trees there. I will follow you there and try to bring this elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are brahmanas who are mild and devoted to the truth. They are extremely learned and seek to ensure the pleasure of all beings. They study itihasa and the Puranas. They offer libations and give offerings to brahmanas. O maharshi! Worlds are ordained for such people. Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there. If you know about such a region, tell me about it. I will quickly go there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There is the grove of Nandana that belongs to the king of the kinnaras.[268] It possesses many excellent blossoming trees and is loved by Narada. Large numbers of gandharvas and apsaras are always there. I will follow you there and try to bring this elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are people who are always accomplished in dancing and singing. They are devoted to the welfare of people and never seek anything. Worlds are ordained for such people. O maharshi! Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘O Indra among men! There is the beautiful region of Uttara Kuru, where you will find delight with the gods. The brahmanas who reside there were created from the fire. There are those who had other origins and those who were generated from the mountains. Shakra showers down and yields all the objects of desire there. The women there pursue kama. There is no jealousy between men and women there. I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are people who feel no desire about any creature. They do not eat meat and have cast aside the rod of chastisement. They do not cause injury to mobile and immobile objects. They regard all creatures as being like their own selves. They are without desire and without any sense of ownership. They are devoid of attachment. They are indifferent towards gain and loss and regard censure and praise as identical. Worlds are ordained for such people. O maharshi! Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There are eternal worlds beyond these. Those sparkle and are supremely fragrant. They are devoid of sorrow. That is the abode of King Soma. O great-souled one! I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are those who are devoted to donating, but never accept anything back. For no reason do they accept anything from others. There is nothing that they are not prepared to give to the deserving and to all their guests. These people are extremely gracious. They are forgiving and do not speak ill of others. They are devoid of attachment and are always auspicious in conduct. Worlds are ordained for such people. O maharshi! Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There are resplendent and eternal worlds beyond these. They are free from dust, free from darkness and free from sorrow. This is the extremely great world of Aditya, meant for those who possess excellent conduct. I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are those who are devoted to studying. They are devoted to serving their preceptors. They are ascetics, excellent in their vows and devoted to the truth. They never speak against their preceptors. They always seek to tend to the tasks of their preceptors. Worlds are ordained for such people. O maharshi! These are the pure and cleansed ones, restrained in speech. Those great-souled ones are established in the truth and learned in the Vedas. Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There are resplendent and eternal worlds beyond these. Those sparkle and are supremely fragrant. They are devoid of sorrow. That is the abode of King Varuna. O great-souled one! I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are people who observe the *chaturmasya* sacrifice. There are worlds obtained by those who perform one thousand sacrifices. There are faithful brahmanas who follow the ordiances and offer agnihotra oblations for three years. Those great-souled ones bear the burden of dharma with their own wives. They are well-established along the appropriate path. There is said to be a destination for such people, who have dharma in their souls. Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘Indra’s world is sparkling. It is devoid of sorrow. It is extremely difficult to reach and is sought by men. That is the abode of the one with abundant energy. O king! I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are brave men who live for one hundred years. They study the Vedas and without any distraction, perform sacrifices. All of these wander around in Shakra’s world. Dhritarashtra will go to a superior world and not there.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There are the great worlds of Prajapati. These are in the vault of heaven and all of these are devoid of sorrow. These belong to the learned ones from whom all the worlds have been generated. I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are kings who have bathed after a royal sacrifice. Those great-souled ones have protected their subjects. They have bathed their limbs after a horse sacrifice. But Dhritarashtra will not go to their worlds.’

‘“Goutama replied, ‘There are blazing and eternal worlds beyond these. Those sparkle and are supremely fragrant. They are devoid of sorrow. Those worlds are extremely difficult to obtain and there is no oppression there. This is Goloka. I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.’

‘“Dhritarashtra said, ‘There are people who possess one thousand cows and every year, give away one hundred. There are people who possess one hundred cows and every year, according to capacity, give away ten. There are those who possess ten and give away one. There are generous ones who possess five and give away one. There are brahmanas who emaciate themselves through brahmacharya. They recite words about the brahman. Those spirited ones are devoted to visiting the tirthas. In Goloka, they find delight on celestial vehicles. They go to Prabhasa, the sacred Manasa, the great lake of Pushkara, the sacred Naimisha, the tirtha of Bahuda, Karatoya, Gaya, Gayashira,

Vipasha, Sthulavaluka, Tushniganga, Dashaganga, Mahahrada, Goutami, Koushiki, Sarasvati, Drishadvati and Yamuna. Those pure and great-souled ones, firm in their vows, go to divine and auspicious regions, where they are adorned in celestial garlands. They go to those fragrant regions. But Dhritarashtra will not go there.'

'"Goutama replied, 'There are regions where there is no fear from the cold and no fear from heat. There is no hunger, thirst, suffering, unhappiness and happiness. There is nothing hated or loved. There is no friend or enemy. There is no old age or death. There is no good deed or bad. Those who are wise and spirited find extensive prosperity there. That is Svayambhu's auspicious world. I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back.'

'"Dhritarashtra said, 'There are those who are free from all attachments. They have cleansed their souls and are firm in their vows. They establish themselves in the yoga of *adhyatma*. They attain the destination of heaven. They possess the attribute of sattva and obtain Brahma's auspicious world. O great sage! You will not be able to see Dhritarashtra there.'

'"Goutama replied, 'The *rathantara* and *brihat are* chanted there.[269] The sacrificial altar is strewn with lotuses. The drinker of soma goes there on tawny horses.[270] I will follow you there and try to bring the elephant back. I know that you are Shatakratu, the slayer of Vritra. You are the one who roams through the earth and the universe. Through mental affliction, I hope I have not said or done anything unpleasant to you.'

'"Shakra said, 'I came to this world traversed by people and followed in their footsteps so as to seize this elephant. I bow down before you. Command me. I will do everything that you ask me to.'

'"Goutama replied, 'Give my son, the white elephant, back. It is a child and is only ten years old. It resides in this forest with me and I have no second companion. O Indra of the gods! Give me back the elephant.'

'"Shakra said, 'O foremost among brahmanas! This elephant is your son. It is sniffing in the air and looking towards you. It is sniffing your feet with its trunk. I bow down before you. Meditate so that I may obtain benefit.'

'"Goutama replied, 'O Indra of the gods! I always think of what will be auspicious for you. I always meditate about you and worship you. O Shakra! Grant me everything auspicious. Given by you, I am accepting this elephant.'

'"Shakra said, 'There are learned, spirited and great-souled ones who have the Vedas hidden inside them. Among all those great-souled ones, you alone have been able to recognize me. I am pleased with you now. Listen. O brahmana! Swiftly come to me with your son, the elephant. Today, without any delay, you will obtain the auspicious worlds.'"

'Bhishma continued, "Placing Goutama and his son, the elephant, ahead of him, the wielder of the vajra went to heaven, a place that is extremely difficult for even the righteous to reach."'

## Chapter 1787(106)

'Yudhishthira said, "You have spoken about many kinds of gifts, tranquility, truth, non-violence, satisfaction with one's own wife and the fruits of donations. O grandfather! It is known that there

is nothing other than the strength of austerities. You should now explain about supreme austerities."

'Bhishma replied, "O Yudhishthira! There are said to be worlds associated with austerities. O Kounteya! It is my view that there is no austerity that is superior to fasting. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Bhagiratha and the great-souled Brahma. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! We have heard that Bhagiratha went beyond the world of the gods, Goloka and the world of the rishis. On seeing this, Brahma spoke these words to King Bhagiratha. 'This region is extremely difficult to reach. How have you come here? O Bhagiratha! The gods, the gandharvas and men cannot come here, without tormenting themselves through austerities. How have you come here?'

'"Bhagiratha replied, 'Without any doubt, I always gave to brahmanas. I always gave them hundreds and thousands.[271] Know that I always practised brahmacharya. It is because of those fruits that I have come here. I performed the *ekaratra* sacrifice and the *pancharatra* sacrifice ten times each and the *ekadasha* sacrifice eleven times.[272] I performed one hundred *jyotishtoma* sacrifices. But it is not because of those fruits that I have come here. For one hundred years, I always resided on the banks of the Jahnavi, tormenting myself through austerities. I gave away thousands of she-mules and women there. But I have not come to this city because of that. In Pushkara, I gave brahmanas one hundred thousand horses and again two hundred thousand horses. I gave them thousands of cows. I gave excellent and garlanded maidens, ornamented with golden moons.[273] There were another sixty thousand who wore ornaments made out of pure gold. O protector of the worlds! In the sacrifice of *gosava*[274] I gave away one hundred million cows. I gave each of them[275] ten cows ready for milking, accompanied by their calves and gold and brass vessels for milking. Once they had accepted these, controlling myself, I gave each of them ten more cows that had only had one calf each. These were those that yielded milk and were rohinis. I gave them ten million more cows and all of these yielded milk. I gave them ten times that number. O Brahma! But I have not come here because of that. I gave away one hundred thousand horses of the *bahlika* variety. They were white and had golden harnesses. But that is not the reason I have come here. O Brahma! I gave away eight crore of gold coins and another ten crore at each sacrifice that I performed. But it is not because of those fruits that I have come here. O grandfather! I gave away seventeen crore horses. They were pale yellow in complexion and possessed black ears. They were adorned with golden harnesses. O Brahma! I gave away seventeen thousand she-elephants.[276] They were gigantic in size and their tusks were as large as ploughs. They were adorned in golden garlands. O lord of the gods! I gave away ten thousand chariots that were made out of gold throughout. They were ornamented with celestial decorations made out of gold. There were seven thousand more that were yoked to horses that were ornamented with gold. I gave these away in the form of dakshina at ten horse sacrifices that I performed, following what has been recommended in the Vedas. I was Shakra's equal in my power and in the valour of my sacrifices. O grandfather! At eight royal sacrifices that I performed, I vanquished all the kings and gave them away as dakshina, with thousands of gold coins strung around their necks. But that is not the reason I have come here, because of those sacrifices. O lord of the universe! The dakshina given there flowed over everything, like the Ganga's current. Following my inclinations, to each.[277] I gave two thousand elephants and two thousand horses that were ornamented in gold and one hundred of the best villages. I did this three times. I was an ascetic and controlled my diet. I restrained

my speech. For a long period of time, I resided in the Himalayas, along the Ganga, whose flow is irresistible. Her flow was held by Mahadeva on his head. O grandfather! But I have not come here because of those fruits. I hurled the shami stick[278] and performed tens of thousands of sacrifices for the gods. Some lasted for thirteen days, others for twelve days. Some were *pundarika* sacrifices. But I am not here because of those fruits. I gave eight thousand humped bulls to brahmanas. Each of them was white and the horns were encrusted with gold. I gave them beautiful wives with golden necklaces. I gave piles of gold and gems. There were mountains of jewels. There were hundreds of thousands of villages, prosperous with wealth and grain. At the many great sacrifices I performed, I attentively gave each brahmana one hundred thousand cows that had only had a single calf each. But I am not here because of that. With dakshina, I performed sacrifices that lasted for eleven days. O god! There were horse sacrifices that lasted for twenty four days. O Brahma! Yet again, I performed such rites sixteen times. But I haven't come here because of those fruits. I also gave each of them a grove with kanchana trees. Each grove extended for a yojana on every side and was full of gems. But I am not here because of those fruits. Without any anger, for thirty years, I practised the excellent *turayana* vow[279] During this period, every day, I cheerfully gave brahmanas eighty thousand cows. They yielded milk and were rohinis. O protector of the universe! O lord of the gods! I always gave to brahmanas. But I have not come here because of those fruits. O Brahma! I always performed sacrifices with thirty fires. I performed eight *sarvamedha* and seven *naramedha* sacrifices. I also performed one hundred and twenty eight *vishvajit* sacrifices.[280] O lord of the gods! But I have not come here because of those fruits. On the banks of Sarayu, Bahuda and Ganga, and in Naimisha, I gave away one million cows. It is not because of that either. Indra knew about the truth and kept it a secret. However, through his austerities, Bhargava[281] got to know. O one who should be worshipped! Blazing in his energy, Ushanas revealed that means of success and I have followed it. I have satisfied brahmanas and obtained success through those deeds. O lord! Thousands of rishis and others assembled and told me, "Go to Brahma's world." O lord! Thousands of brahmanas were pleased with me and also told me this. That is the reason I have obtained this world and there is nothing more to think about. This is the method that the ordainer has ordained. Asked by you, I have described it accurately to you. It is my view that there is no austerity that is greater than fasting. O supreme among gods! I bow down before you. Be pleased.'"

'Bhishma continued, "King Bhagiratha told Brahma this. Following the indicated rites, he worshipped the one who deserves to be worshipped."'

## Chapter 1788(107)

'Yudhishthira asked, "The Vedas say that a man possesses valour that lasts for one hundred years and has a lifespan of one hundred years. O grandfather! In that case, why do men die when they are children? Despite possessing a long lifespan, why does a man's lifespan become short? How does one obtain fame? How does one obtain prosperity? Is it austerities, brahmacharya, meditation, oblations, herbs, birth or conduct? O grandfather! Tell me this."

‘Bhishma replied, “I will now tell you about what you have asked, the reason why a man has a short life or a long life. How does he obtain fame and how does he obtain prosperity? How should a man act so as to obtain benefit? Conduct ensures a long lifespan. Prosperity is obtained through conduct. It is through conduct that a man obtains fame, in this world and in the next. A man who is wicked in conduct does not obtain a long lifespan. Creatures are terrified of him and suffer on his account. Therefore, a person who desires his own prosperity must act in accordance with good conduct. Good conduct destroys the wickedness of the body and removes everything that is inauspicious. Good conduct is the sign of dharma. Good conduct is the sign of the virtuous. The conduct of virtuous people is a sign of good conduct. Even if people hear of a person who follows dharma and undertakes appropriate tasks, without actually having seen him, they repeatedly act so as to bring him pleasure. There are people who are non-believers, devoid of rites, those who cross their preceptors and the sacred texts. They are evil in conduct and only know about adharma. Their lifespans are destroyed. They don’t follow good behaviour and violate the ordinances. They are always indiscriminate about sexual intercourse. Such men have short lives and go to hell. If a man doesn’t possess any auspicious signs, but is nevertheless faithful and without malice, following good conduct, then he lives for one hundred years. A person without anger, truthful in speech, non-injurious towards creatures, without jealousy and without deceit—lives for one hundred years. A man who crushes lumps of earth or tears up grass,[282] bites his nails, eats food tasted by others and is restless—does not obtain greatness.

‘“A person must wake up at *brahma muhurta*[283] and think about dharma and artha. After waking, he must perform the ablutions and joining the hands in salutation, recite the morning prayers, facing the east. In the same way, restraining conversation with others, the evening prayers must be recited. One must never look at the rising sun or the setting sun. During the two sandhyas,[284] the rishis worship for a long time. That is the reason they obtain long lifespans. Therefore, restraining speech at the time, one must respectively face the east and the west. There are brahmanas who do not worship during the eastern and the western sandhya. All of them follow adharma and the king must make them undertake the tasks of shudras. For all the varnas, one must never have sexual intercourse with another person’s wife. For a man, there is nothing on earth that shortens a lifespan as much as having intercourse with another person’s wife. The application of cosmetics, dressing the hair, applying of collyrium, brushing the teeth and worshipping the gods must be done in the forenoon. One must never look at urine or excrement, or stand on these. One must not speak when passing urine. One must not release excrement in a field or near a village. Both urine and excrement must never be released in water. One must not speak while eating and must face the east. One should not criticize the food. Having finished eating, one must mentally touch the fire. If one eats facing the east, one obtains a long lifespan. If one eats facing the south, one obtains fame. If one eats facing the west one obtains wealth. If one eats facing the north, one speaks the truth. One must never sit on anything like chaff, hair, ash or bones. From a distance, one must avoid the water that someone else has used for bathing. One must offer oblations for peace and recite the savitri mantra. One must be seated while eating and not walk around. One must not pass urine while standing, or on ashes or inside a pen for cows. One must wash one’s feet before eating. But one must not go to sleep with wet feet. A person who washes his feet before eating lives for one hundred years. Three things of energy must never be touched with a hand

that has not been washed after eating—a fire, a cow and a brahmana. If one does this, the lifespan is not diminished. When one is impure, one must never look at three objects of energy—the sun, the moon and all the nakshatras. When an aged person arrives, a young person's breath of life ascends upwards. By standing up and greeting him, it is got back again. After greeting an aged person, a seat must be offered to him. When he is seated, one must remain standing, hands joined in salutation. When the aged person walks, one must follow him from the rear.[285] One must not sit on a broken seat. A broken brass vessel must also be thrown away. One must never eat while clad in a single garment.[286] One should not bathe naked. One should not sleep naked. One should not touch food that someone else has partly eaten. In an impure state, one must not touch another person's head, since all the breath of life is concentrated there. One must not grasp another person's hair or strike him on the head. One must not join one's hands together and use them for scratching one's own head. While bathing, one must not repeatedly dip one's head in the water. Then, the lifespan will not be shortened. After having washed the head, one should not apply oil to the limbs or touch the water again. Before eating, one should eat some crushed sesamum. One will then obtain greatness. One should never teach or study in an impure state. Nor should one mentally think of these when a bad stench is borne along by the wind. In this connection, those who know about the ancient accounts recount a chant that Yama sung. 'If a person speaks about studying or studies during an impure state, then he reduces his lifespan and that of his offspring.'[287] Therefore, one must never prepare to teach or study at such times. If a person passes urine or excrement towards the sun, towards a fire, towards a cow, towards a brahmana or along a road—then his lifespan is destroyed. During the day, urine and excrement must be released while facing the north. At night, they must be released while facing the south. If this is followed, the lifespan will not be diminished. A person who desires to live for a long time must not show disrespect towards three creatures, regardless of how weak they are—a brahmana, a kshatriya and a snake. All three possess virulent poison. When angry, a virulent serpent can burn down with its sight. An angry kshatriya can also burn down in that way, through the touch of his energy. A brahmana can destroy the entire lineage, through his sight, as well as through his meditation. Therefore, a learned person makes efforts to worship all three. One must never engage in enmity against one's preceptor. O Yudhishthira! If the preceptor is enraged, he must be pacified through entreaties. Even if he does something improper, the preceptor must always be followed. There is no doubt that the criticism of the preceptor burns down a man. One must always pass urine at a spot that is far from a habitation. After this, one must always wash one's feet at a distance. Those who desire benefit must throw away food that has been partially eaten by others far away.

'"One should not set out on a journey in the morning, in the evening, when it is midday, with someone one does not know, alone, or with a vrishala. One must always yield right of way to a brahmana, cattle, the king, old people, those who bear burdens, those who are pregnant and those who are weak. When one comes upon a large tree that one knows about, one must circumambulate it. One must always circumambulate a crossroads that is along the path. One must never frequent crossroads at midday, in the evening and in the middle of the night. This is also true of both the sandhyas. One must never wear footwear or garments that have been worn by another person. One must always be a brahmachari and one must never cross one's legs. One must always be a brahmachari on the night of the new moon, the night of the full moon, the fourth lunar tithi and the eighth lunar tithi of both the

pakshas.[288] One must not pointlessly eat meat, nor should one eat meat from the backbone. One must avoid censure, calumny and slander. One should not utter cruel words and those that make another person feel inferior. One should not agitate others with words and say that people are wicked. When they descend from the mouth, such words are like arrows. They strike and cause sorrow, night and day. They descend on the inner organs of the other person. Therefore, a learned person does not release these on others. When a forest is struck with arrows or cut down with an axe, it grows again. But words spoken badly are terrible. The wounds caused by words are never healed. One should not quarrel with, and strike, those who have a limb missing, have an excessive limb, are lacking in knowledge, are deficient in beauty and riches and lacking in spirit. If a person is a non-believer, criticizes the Vedas, slanders the gods, or is hateful, insolent and harsh—he must be shunned. One must not angrily pick up someone else's rod and use it to strike.[289] That apart, it has been said that for purposes of imparting instruction, only the son or the disciple can be struck. One must not cause suffering to brahmanas. One must not point a finger at nakshatras. One must not mention the names of tithis and pakshas. If this is done, the lifespan will not be diminished. After having passed urine or excrement or having walked along a road, one must wash one's feet. One must also do this before studying and eating. The gods have thought of three things that are pure and recommended for the use of brahmanas—something that is invisible, something that has been washed and something that has been praised in words. *Samyava*,[290] krisara, meat, *shashkuli*[291]and payasam must never be cooked for one's own self. They must be offered to the gods. One should always tend to the sacrificial fire. One should always give alms. One should always use a *dantakashtha*,[292] refraining from speaking at the time. One should not be in bed when the sun has arisen. If this happens, one must atone for this. After waking, one must first greet the mother, the father, the preceptor and other seniors. That is the way to attain greatness. The dantakashtha must always be thrown away and a new one used. One must always eat according to the injunctions of the sacred texts, fasting on auspicious occasions. When one passes urine or excrement, one must control one's mind and always face the north when doing this. Without worshipping the gods first, one should never set out. Elsewhere, it has been said that this also applies to preceptors, the aged, those who know about dharma and those who are learned. An extremely intelligent person never looks at a mirror that is dirty. He never has intercourse with a woman he does not know, or with one who is pregnant. One should not sleep with the head facing the north or the west. One should sleep with one's head facing the east or the south. One should not sleep on a bed that is broken or weak. One should not sleep on a bed without a cover, or lie down diagonally. One must not bathe naked and never in the night. After bathing, a learned person doesn't allow his body to be massaged. One should not smear unguents without having had a bath first. After having bathed, the garment must not be waved around.[293] A man must never wear wet garments. One should not take off the garlands. Nor should one wear them outside.[294] One should not wear garlands of red flowers. The learned person only uses white flowers. O lord! Avoid the lotus and the water lily. However, a red flower can be worn on the head, even if it is wild. A garland made of kanchana flowers is never censured. O lord of the earth! After bathing, one must always use wet unguents.[295] An intelligent man does not mix up his garments.[296] One should not wear a garment worn by another person. Nor should one wear a garment without a fringe.[297] O best among men! One must wear a different garment when

one goes to bed. One must wear a different garment when making a journey. One must also wear a different garment when worshipping the gods. Otherwise, the gods are dishonoured.

‘“An intelligent person uses separate unguents made out of *priyangu*, sandalwood, *bilva*, *tagara* and *kesara*.[298] When fasting, one must purify oneself through a bath and wear ornaments. On the days of the new moon and the full moon, one must always be a brahmachari. One must never eat food cooked by a woman who is going through her monthly period. One should not eat food that has lost its essence. Nor should one eat food, without first offering it to someone who is looking towards it. An intelligent person does not sit close to someone who is inferior or impure. Food that is forbidden by dharma should not even be eaten subsequently.[299] An excellent person who desires prosperity on earth does not eat *pippala*, *vata*, *shanashaka* and *udumbara*.[300] The meat of goats, cows and peacocks must be avoided. One must not eat dried meat, or meat that is stale. A learned person does not eat salt picked up with his hand.[301] In the night, curds and saktu must not be eaten and pointless meat[302] must also be avoided. One should not eat food with hair in it. Nor should one eat at the funeral ceremony of an enemy. One must be controlled. One must eat in the morning and in the evening and never in between. One must not talk while eating. While eating, one must not be clad in a single garment. One should never eat without being seated. One should never eat food off the bare ground. When one is seated and one is eating, one must not make a sound. O lord of the earth! Water and food must first be offered to a guest. An intelligent man who is not distracted only eats later. O lord of men! A person who eats food without first offering it to well-wishers, and to those who are entitled to eat in the same row,[303] is said to partake of virulent poison. After having water, payasam, ghee, curds, saktu and honey, the leftovers must never be offered to anyone. O tiger among men! One should never be suspicious of the food one is having. A person who desires his benefit must never drink curds after a meal. When one has finished eating, one must wash oneself, using water and the hand. One should sprinkle one’s right toe with some water. One should then touch the head with the hand and controlled, touch fire. A man who is skilled in these techniques becomes superior to all his relatives. After eating, noticing where the breath of life is established, one should touch the navel with the palm of the hand. However, the hand must not be wet. The space between the base and the tip of the thumb is said to be brahma tirtha. The back of the little finger is said to be deva tirtha. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The space between the thumb and the middle finger is used in offering oblations of water to the ancestors, following the ordinances.

‘“One should not speak ill of others. One should never say anything that is disagreeable. A person who desires his own well-being is not enraged, even when he is provoked. One should not converse with outcasts. One should avoid their sight. One should not have any association with them. That is the way to attain greatness. One should not have sexual intercourse during the day. Nor should one have intercourse with a maiden or a harlot. One should not have intercourse with a woman who has not bathed. That is the way to attain greatness. Different parts of the body must be washed after different tasks. After doing this, one must drink water thrice and wash one’s lips with water twice. That is the way for a man to be purified. After all the organs of action have been washed, a man must sprinkle himself with water thrice. After this, he can undertake the rites mentioned in the Vedas for ancestors and gods. O Kourava! Listen to the purification recommended for a brahmana. This is said to be beneficial before and after eating, and for everything else. In all kinds of purification, the brahma

tirtha must be touched first. Aftere releasing excrement or after spitting, one must touch water and be purified. An aged relative or a friend who is poor must be invited to reside in one's own house. One will be praised and obtain a long lifespan. One is praised if pigeons, or male or female parrots, are kept in the house. They remove difficulties from the house and so do cockroaches. If fire-flies, vultures, wood pigeons and bees enter a house and seek shelter in it, an act of pacification must be performed. These are inauspicious signs and great-souled ones must seek to counter them. One must never reveal the secrets of great-souled people. One should not have intercourse with a woman who is prohibited, or with a king's wife or her friends. O Yudhishthira! One should not be intimate with physicians, children, the aged and servants. O Indra among kings! One must always take care of friends, brahmanas, those who have sought refuge and relatives. That is the way to obtain greatness. O lord of men! If a wise person desires his own benefit, he must always dwell in a house that has been constructed in consultation with architects and brahmanas. O king! One should not sleep during the two sandhyas. Nor should one attend to learning at those times. An intelligent person does not eat at these times. That is the way to obtain greatness. Rites for the ancestors should not be performed at night. Nor should one indulge in cosmetics after having taken food. If one desires one's own prosperity, one should not render offerings of water in the night. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! At night, saktu must always be avoided. Leftovers of food and drink must not be taken. At night, one should not eat in excess. One should not kill birds, especially after having fed them.[304] An immensely wise person must marry a maiden who has been born in an extremely good lineage, has all the praiseworthy signs and has attained the right age. So that the lineage is established, one should have offspring. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The sons must be imparted learning and knowledge about the dharma of the family. The daughters who are born must be bestowed on sons born from good families. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The sons must be established, so that they can earn subsistence from what the family owns. Before worshipping the ancestors and the gods, the head must be washed. A man's funeral ceremony must not be performed during the nakshatra he has been born under. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Rites with a fire must not be performed during Proshthapada.[305] One must always avoid nakshatras that are said to be fierce. All of them must be shunned. O Indra among kings! When being shaved, one must be controlled and must face the east. One can also face the north. That is the way to obtain greatness. One must never criticize others, or even one's own self. O bull among the Bharata lineage! It has been said that censure is not in conformity with dharma.

'"O supreme among men! One should avoid a woman who is deficient in limb or is a maiden. One must avoid a woman who is descended from the same rishi's lineage.[306] One must avoid a woman who comes from the same lineage as one's mother.[307] One must also avoid an aged woman, one who has become an ascetic, or one who is devoted to her husband. One must avoid one who is excessively dark, or one who has a bad complexion. A learned person will not have intercourse with a woman whose birth is unknown, or with one who has inferior birth. One should also avoid marriage with a woman whose complexion is yellow, or one who has leprosy. O lord of men! Three kinds of women must be avoided—those with a family history of epilepsy, those who are inferior and those born in a family that has white leprosy. One should only marry a woman who possesses the auspicious marks, has all the praiseworthy signs and is pleasant and beautiful. O Yudhishthira! One should marry into a

family that is superior or equal. If a person desires prosperity, he should not marry a woman who is inferior or an outcast. The fire must be carefully lit. All the rites spoken about in the Vedas and the Brahmana texts must be carefully observed. One must not injure women and one must always protect the wife. Jealousy reduces the lifespan. Therefore, jealousy must be avoided. Sleeping during the day reduces the lifespan. Sleeping after the sun has arisen also does that. Those who sleep in the morning and the evening are as impure as those who eat leftovers. Intercourse with someone else's wife reduces the lifespan. After having been shaved, one must not remain impure.[308] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! One must make efforts not to do what is prohibited. One must not eat during the sandhyas. Nor should one eat food in which there is excrement. Before undertaking any rite, there are some tasks that must carefully be done. O lord of men! One must bathe and worship the brahmanas. One should also bathe before worshipping the gods and saluting the preceptor. Unless invited, one should not turn up at a sacrifice as a spectator. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If one goes there without an invitation, this reduces the lifespan. One should not travel alone, nor should one travel during the night. Before the western sandhya arrives, one must find shelter inside a house. O bull among men! One must always follow the commands of the mother, the father and the preceptor, without thinking about whether these are desirable or undesirable.

'"O lord of men! One must pay attention to Dhanurveda and to the Vedas. O Indra among kings! Pay attention to riding on elephants, riding on horses and riding on chariots. A person who pays attention to these, and to sacrifices, obtains happiness. He is invincible towards his enemies, his servants and his relatives. If he is engaged in protecting the subjects, he will never suffer a loss. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You should know about the sacred texts of logic and about the sacred texts of sound. O lord of men! You should know about the sacred texts of the gandharvas and about the different kinds of arts. You should always hear about the Puranas, itihasa, different stories and about the conduct of great-souled ones. If the wife is not in the right season, one should not have intercourse with her, or invite her. A learned person has intercourse with her on the fourth day, after she has bathed, and in the night. Intercourse on the fifth day gives birth to a daughter. Intercourse on the sixth day gives birth to a son. A learned person follows these rules in having intercourse with the wife. Relatives, matrimonial allies and friends must always be honoured. To the best of one's capacity, sacrifices must be performed and many kinds of dakshina must be offered at these sacrifices. O lord of men! After this period is over, one moves on to the next period, leading up to death.[309] I have briefly recounted the techniques that lead to a long life. O Yudhishthira! Anything that remains, which I have refrained from stating, must be learnt from aged ones. Conduct leads to prosperity. Conduct enhances fame. Conduct increases the lifespan. Conduct destroys anything that is inauspicious. Conduct is said to be superior to all the different kinds of knowledge. Conduct is said to be the power of dharma. Conduct increases the lifespan. I have thus told you about conduct. This is great in attaining heaven and obtaining benedictions. Brahma has said that one must exhibit compassion towards all the varnas."'

## Chapter 1789(108)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O bull among the Bharata lineage! How should an elder brother behave towards a younger brother and how should a younger brother behave towards an older brother? Tell me this.”

‘Bhishma replied, “O son! You have always been the eldest and you must behave as an elder brother. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is the superior conduct that a preceptor exhibits towards a disciple. Even if the preceptor is unaccomplished in wisdom, the disciple is unable to abandon him. At times, the elder brother must be blind to the transgressions of the younger brothers. Even if he understands, he must pretend to be stupid. He must refrain from speaking to them about these transgressions. If it is evident that they[310] have different inclinations, men will try to create dissension. O Kounteya! Enemies are always tormented by prosperity and desire to bring about dissension. It is through the eldest that the lineage prospers and is also destroyed. If the eldest is inferior, the lineage is destroyed in every possible way. An eldest brother who injures a younger brother is no longer entitled to the share of the eldest brother and must be restrained by the king. There is no doubt that a deceitful man must go to the worlds meant for the wicked. It is said that the birth of such a person is fruitless, like the flower of a bamboo. When a wicked man is born, he creates all kinds of hardships for the family. He generates ill fame and all the fame vanishes. If a person performs perverse deeds, his other brothers should not give him his share. The eldest brother no longer needs to give such a younger brother a share in the ancestral property. If riches are obtained by an elder brother through his own efforts, as a result of travels and without using the ancestral property in any way, then unless he so desires, a share in these need not be given to younger brothers. When the father has not ascended upwards,[311] if the brothers want the property to be divided up, the father should never have an unequal division among the sons. The eldest brother must not be ignored, regardless of whether he performs good or bad deeds. Even if the wife is wicked, her interests must be considered.[312] Those who are learned about dharma say that this is the best dharma. The *upadhyaya* is superior to ten *acharyas*.[313] The father is superior to ten upadhyayas. The mother is superior to ten fathers and even to the entire earth. There is no preceptor who is equal to the mother and all the respect is due to her. That is the reason why people think that the mother is the most superior. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When the father is dead, the elder brother is regarded as equal to the father. He is the one who provides a means of sustenance for everyone and protects them. All the younger brothers must bow down before him and follow his instructions. Like their father, he is the one who will provide them a means of subsistence. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The body is created by the father and the mother. But the birth that the instructor gives[314] is true birth and is without old age and without death. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The elder sister is like a mother. The wife of the elder brother is also like that, since in infancy, the younger brother is suckled at her breast.”’

## Chapter 1790(109)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O grandfather. Among all the varnas, including the *mlechchhs*, there is a view that there should be fasting. But the reason for this is not known to us. We have heard that

brahmanas and kshatriyas must follow rituals. O grandfather! But why should the others fast? O king! How did the ritual of fasting come to be applied to everyone? Tell me this. What kind of destination is obtained by those who are given to fasting? It is said that fasting leads to supreme benefits and that one should fast. O foremost among men! What are the fruits that are obtained through fasting? How is one freed from adharma and how does one obtain dharma? O supreme among the Bharata lineage! How does one obtain supreme heaven? O lord of men! What must be donated after fasting? Tell me about the dharma that leads to the obtaining of happiness and artha."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Kounteya knew about dharma and asked this. Bhishma, Shantanu's son, who knew the truth about dharma, spoke these words to Dharma's son. "O bull among the Bharata lineage! O great king! In ancient times, I had heard about this, about the rituals of fasting and about its best qualities. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I had asked Angiras, Prajapati's son. Asked by me, that store of austerities told me the truth. I asked this question to the illustrious one who was generated from the fire. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He told me about the sacred rituals of fasting.

'"Angiras said, 'O descendant of the Kuru lineage! It is recommended that brahmanas and kshatriyas should fast for three nights. O bull among men! It has also been decreed that they can fast for two nights, or for a single night. Out of confusion, if vaishyas or shudras fast for three nights or two nights, they gain nothing out of this.[315] Without fasting, eating one-fourth of the normal food is recommended for vaishyas and shudras. Those who know about dharma have not recommended that they should fast for three nights. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a person who knows about the brahman fasts on the fifth or sixth lunar day, or on the day of the full moon, he obtains the quality of forgiveness and beauty and becomes learned. If a person performs sacrifices and fasts either on the fifth or the sixth lunar day, eating on the other, he is never without offspring. He is wise and is never poor. He gets to feed brahmanas. O Kounteya! If a person fasts on the eighth lunar day, or on the fourteenth day of shuklapaksha, he is without disease and becomes valiant. If a person devotedly eats only one meal during the month of Margashirsha,[316] he is freed from disease and sins and gets to feed brahmanas. He is full of all kinds of benefit and he obtains all the herbs. He obtains crops through agriculture, a lot of riches and many sons are born to him. O Kounteya! If a person devotedly eats only one meal during the month of Pousha,[317] he becomes extremely fortunate and handsome and obtains a share of fame. If a person is devoted to his father and eats only one meal during the month of Magha,[318] he is reborn in a prosperous lineage and obtains greatness amidst his relatives. If a person eats only one meal during the month of Bhagadaiva,[319] he is loved by women and they are under his control. If a person is controlled and eats only one meal during the month of Chaitra,[320] he is reborn in a great family that has a wealth of gold, jewels and pearls. If a person conquers his senses and eats only one meal during the month of Vaishakha,[321] regardless of whether the person is a man or a woman, the person obtains superiority among all the relatives. If a person eats only one meal a day during the month of Jyeshthamula,[322] that person obtains the greatest and supreme prosperity, regardless of whether the birth is as a man or as a woman. Without any distraction, if a person eats only one meal during the month of Ashadha,[323] he is reborn with a lot of grain, a lot of riches and a lot of sons. If a person is controlled and eats only one meal during the month of Shravana,[324] he enhances his relatives and is consecrated by them as superior. If a man eats only one meal during the month of Proshthapada,[325] he swells with wealth and his prosperity remains stable. If a person eats

only one meal a day during the month of Ashvayuja,[326] he obtains subjects and mounts and a large number of sons are born to him. If a man eats only one meal a month during the month of Kartika,[327] when he is reborn, he is brave, obtains great fame and has many wives. O tiger among men! I have recounted the benefits from fasting in different months.

‘“‘O king! Listen to the rules for the tithis. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a person only eats when a paksha is over,[328] when he is reborn, he obtains a long life, has many sons and owns many cattle. If a person fasts for three nights in every month and does this for twelve years, he becomes an uncontested lord of the tribe,[329] with no rivals. O best among the Bharata lineage! These are the rules and the rites that should be followed for twelve years and you should also observe them. O king! If a person only eats in the morning and in the evening, and doesn’t drink even water in between, if he is always devoted to non-violence, if he offers oblations into the fire, and if he does this every day for six years, there is no doubt that he will obtain success. Such a man obtains the fruits got through an agnishtoma sacrifice. He gets to dwell with apsaras, who delight him with their dancing and singing. He ascends on a celestial vehicle that has the complexion of molten gold. He obtains greatness in Brahma’s world for a full one thousand years. When those merits are exhausted, he returns[330] and obtains greatness. If a man takes only one meal a day for an entire year, he obtains the fruits of an atiratra sacrifice. He obtains greatness in heaven for ten thousand years. When those merits are exhausted, he returns and obtains greatness. If a person only eats on every fourth day for an entire year, if he is devoted to non-violence, if he is always truthful in speech and if he controls his senses, he obtains the fruits of a vajapeya sacrifice. He obtains greatness in heaven for thirty thousand years. O Kounteya! If a man only eats on every sixth day for an entire year, that man obtains the fruits of a horse sacrifice. He travels on a celestial vehicle that is yoked to ruddy geese. He obtains delight in heaven for forty thousand years. O king! If a man remains alive through only eating on every eighth day for an entire year, he obtains the fruits of a *gavamaya* sacrifice.[331] He travels on a celestial vehicle yoked to swans and cranes. He obtains delight in heaven for fifty thousand years. If a person only eats at the end of the fortnight and does this for a year, the illustrious Angiras has said that this is like fasting for six months. He resides in heaven for sixty thousand years. O lord of the earth! He is woken up from sleep with the sweet sounds of veenas, lutes and flutes. O son! O king! If a man eats only once a day for an entire year, drinking only water at the end of every month, he obtains the fruits of a vishvajit sacrifice. He travels on a celestial vehicle that is yoked to lions and tigers. He obtains delight in heaven for seventy thousand years. O tiger among men! Fasting for more than a month has not been recommended. O Partha! Those who know about dharma have spoken about these rules for fasting. If a person is not afflicted by disease and follows these indications for fasting, at every step, there is no doubt that he obtains the fruits of sacrifices. He travels to heaven in a celestial vehicle yoked to swans. That man finds delight with one hundred apsara maidens. O lord! If a person is not afflicted by disease and follows these indications for fasting, he obtains delight in heaven for one hundred thousand years. He is woken from his sleep to the sound of *kanchis* and *nupuras*.[332] O bull among the Bharata lineage! He travels on a celestial vehicle that is yoked to thousands of swans and is as radiant as the moon. He goes to a place surrounded by hundreds of women and finds delight there. There, he doesn’t have to look for something that will restore his strength when he is weak, or something that will heal his wound when he is wounded. He will not have to look for medications that

will cure his disease, or something to pacify him when he is angry. He will not have to search for wealth to counter misery caused by a lack of riches. A person who seeks heaven will find happiness and delight there. He will be astride a celestial vehicle that is golden in complexion, one that can travel anywhere at will. Such a man will be ornamented with everything auspicious and will find pleasure, surrounded by hundreds of women. He will be well, successful in attaining his desires. He will be happy and devoid of sin. Through fasting and the eventual giving up of the body, such a man obtains these fruits. He will be on a celestial vehicle that is as radiant as gold, with a complexion that is like that of the rising sun. It will be decorated with lapis lazuli and there will be the sounds of veenas and drums. There will be flags and lamps and the sound of celestial bells. Followed by thousands of women, such a man will find happiness there. O Pandava! He will find delight in heaven for as many thousands of years as there are pores in his body.

‘“‘There is no sacred text that is superior to the Vedas. There is no preceptor who is equal to the mother. There is no acquisition superior to obtaining dharma. There is no austerity superior to fasting. There is nothing superior to, and more sacred than, brahmanas, on earth and in heaven. There is no task in austerities that is equal to fasting. It is through following the rites of fasting that the gods obtained heaven. It is through fasting that the rishis obtained supreme success. For one thousand celestial years, the intelligent Vishvamitra devotedly ate only one meal a day and obtained the status of becoming a brahmana. Chyavana, Jamadagni, Vasishtha, Goutama and Bhrigu—all of these maharshis were forgiving and obtained heaven.’ This is what Angiras indicated to the maharshis earlier. A person who always follows what he has indicated, never confronts any misery. O Kounteya! These are the progressive ordinances that were laid down by maharshi Angiras. If a man listens to these all the time, he doesn’t suffer from any sin. His mind is not overcome by wickedness and he is free from all kinds of confusion. He understands the sounds made by everything, whether it has been born from a womb or has not been born from a womb. That supreme among men obtains eternal fame.”’

## Chapter 1791(110)

‘Yudhishthira said, “The grandfather has spoken about the rules the great-souled ones have laid down for sacrifices. You have also spoken their true qualities, in this world and in the world hereafter. O grandfather! However, those who are poor cannot perform sacrifices. Sacrifices require many objects and an extensive list of articles. O grandfather! Only princes and kings are capable of undertaking these. Those without riches, alone and without help, are deprived of sacrifices. What are the rules that the poor can always follow to obtain these qualities, which are equal to the fruits of sacrifices? O grandfather! Tell me this.”

‘Bhishma replied, “For this, the fruits of fasting were spoken about by Angiras. O Yudhishthira! Those ordinances are equal to the fruits of sacrifices. Listen. There may be a person who is always devoted to non-violence, offering oblations to the fire and only eating in the morning and in the evening, not taking food or water during the intervening period. If he does this for six years, there is no doubt that he will be successful. Such a man obtains a celestial vehicle that is like molten gold in

complexion. He resides amidst celestial women, with the sounds of singing and dancing. With a complexion like that of the fire, he dwells in Prajapati's abode for a *padma* number of years.[333] If a person continuously eats one meal a day for three years and is always devoted to his lawful wife, he obtains the fruits of an agnishtoma sacrifice. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too only on the second day, if he always offers oblations to the fire, if he performs sacrifices at which he gives away a lot of gold and if he does this for one year, he is loved by Vasava. If such a person is truthful in speech, good in conduct, does not hate brahmanas, if he is self-restrained, forgiving and has conquered his anger, he attains the supreme destination. He is astride a sparkling white celestial vehicle, yoked to swans. He dwells with apsaras for two padma years. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every third day, if he always offers oblations to the fire, and if he does this for one year, then he obtains the supreme fruits of an atiratra sacrifice. Such a man obtains a celestial vehicle that is yoked to peacocks and swans. He always dwells in the world of the saptarshis, with the apsaras. The learned know that this residence is for three padma years. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every fourth day, if he always offers oblations to the fire, and if he does this for one year, then he obtains the supreme fruits of a vajapeya sacrifice. Such a man is astride a celestial vehicle, together with Indra's daughters. In Vasava's world, which extends up to the ocean, he always witnesses the king of the gods sporting. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every fifth day, if he always offers oblations to the fire, if he does this for one year, if he is not greedy, truthful in speech and does not injure brahmanas and if he is without jealousy and without sin, then he obtains the fruits of a *dvadashaha* sacrifice.[334] He is on a divine and celestial vehicle made out of molten gold, yoked to swans, which has the complexion of a garland of suns collected together. He resides in a white palace. He happily dwells there for fifty-one padma years.[335] If a sage only eats a meal on every sixth day, if he always offers oblations into the fire, if he does this for one year, if he performs ablutions three times a day and if he is without malice and observes brahmacharya, then he obtains the supreme fruits of a gavamaya sacrifice.[336] He is on a supreme vehicle meant for virtuous people. It is as radiant as a blazing fire and is drawn by swans and peacocks, decorated with pure gold. He sleeps and awakes on the laps of apsaras, to the sound of nupuras and girdles. He resides there for one thousand and three hundred crore, eighteen padma and two *pataka* years.[337] He obtains greatness in Brahma's world for as many years as there is hair on the skins of fifty thousand bears. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every seventh day, if he always offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, if he protects his speech and practises brahmacharya and if he avoids agreeable pigments, liquor and meat, such a man goes to the world of the Maruts and to Indra's world. He is successful in all his objectives and is served by the daughters of the gods. Such a man obtains the fruits of sacrifices at which a lot of gold is given. He enjoys happiness in those worlds for an extremely large number of years. If a man is forgiving for an entire year, if he only eats on every eighth day, if he is always devoted to the tasks of the gods and if he offers oblations into the fire, he obtains the supreme fruits of a poundarika sacrifice. He ascends on a celestial vehicle that has the complexion of lotuses. There is no doubt that he obtains dark, golden, fair and dark women, who are young and beautiful. For an entire year, if a person only eats on every ninth day and if he always offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, then that man obtains the fruits of a horse sacrifice. Such a man obtains a celestial vehicle that has the complexion of a lotus flower. It blazes like the sun and the fire and is full of

energy, like a divine garland. He is conveyed to the eternal firmament by Rudra's daughters. He obtains delight in those worlds for eighteen thousand years and another one crore, one thousand and one hundred years. For an entire year, if a person only eats on every ninth day and if he always offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, he obtains the supreme fruits of one thousand horse sacrifices. He dwells with Brahma's daughter in a region that is agreeable to the hearts of all beings. That man always finds delight with beautiful women. Some of them have the complexions of red lotuses. Others have the complexion of blue lotuses. He is in a supreme celestial vehicle meant for the virtuous. It has the complexion of the waves of the ocean. It goes around in circles, forwards and backwards, in movements that can't be detected. It resounds with the noise of colourful garlands made out of jewels and conch shells. It is decorated with lotuses, crystals and diamonds and there are well-constructed pillars and altars. He ascends this great vehicle, drawn by swans and cranes. If a person only eats ghee on every eleventh day, if he always offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, if he does not desire the wives of others, in thoughts and in deeds and if he does not utter a lie, even for the sake of his mother and his father, then a celestial vehicle presents itself before him. Astride that, he sees Svayambhu and the immensely strong Mahadeva on their celestial vehicles. He is conveyed there by beautiful maidens who are golden in complexion. He resides in that divine and beautiful world of heaven that belongs to Rudra. He dwells there for as many years as it takes for the yuga to be over, one hundred thousand crores and another hundreds of crores. Rudra is always worshipped by the gods and the danavas, who bow their heads down before him. Every day, he gets to see Rudra. If a person only eats ghee on every twelfth day and if he does this for an entire year, he obtains the fruits of all the sacrifices. He is on a celestial vehicle that has the radiance of the twelve Adityas. It is extremely expensive in form, with jewels, pearls and coral. Beautiful peacocks and ruddy geese sing melodiously there. O king! Surrounded by women, he always resides in an expensive palace that is in Brahma's world. The immensely fortunate rishi, Angiras, who knew about dharma, spoke about this. If a person only eats ghee on every thirteenth day and if he continuously does this for a year, he obtains the fruits of a sacrifice performed by the gods. That man is successful in obtaining a celestial vehicle that is named after the red lotus. It is adorned with pure gold and heaped high with gems. There are divine women there, adorned in celestial ornaments. The wind bears along beautiful, auspicious and divine fragrances. He dwells there for *shanku,* pataka, padma, *samudra*[338] and tens and tens of thousands of number of years, until the end of the yuga. He is always delighted with sounds from the singing of the gandharvas and the playing of drums and kettledrums. Celestial maidens give him pleasure. If a person only eats ghee on every fourteenth day and if he continuously does this for an entire year, he obtains the fruits of a great sacrifice.[339] There are ornamented celestial maidens, whose beauty cannot be described and whose ages cannot be discerned. They wear armlets made out of polished and molten gold. They follow him on celestial vehicles. He wakes to the excellent sounds of swans and the jingle of nupuras and kanchis. That man resides in the abode of the celestial maidens. That man resides there for as many years as there are grains of sand in the Jahnavi. If a person eats only one meal a day, and that too at the end of a fortnight, if he conquers his senses and if he continuously offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, then he obtains the supreme fruits of one thousand royal sacrifices. He always ascends on a vehicle that is drawn by swans and peacocks. It is decorated with pure gold and is colourful with circles of jewels. There are beautiful and supreme

women, adorned in divine ornaments. He ascends on that divine and celestial vehicle, with celestial qualities. It has one column, four gates and seven floors and is extremely auspicious. It is beautiful because of the sounds of singing and thousands of flags signifying victory. It is decorated with jewels, pearls and coral that have the tinge of lightning. With rhinoceroses and elephants as mounts, he resides there for thousands of years. If a person only eats ghee, and that too on every sixteenth day, and if he does this continuously for an entire year, he obtains the fruits of a sacrifice at which soma is offered. He always resides in the abode of Soma's daughters. He is worshipped astride a beautiful celestial vehicle that has all the objects of pleasure. It has sweet and pleasant fragrances and can go everywhere at will. He enjoys these fruits for fifty padmas and over and above that, another ten great kalpas.[340] Such a man dwells there for four *sagaras*.[341] If a person only eats ghee, and that too on every seventeenth day, if he offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, he goes to the abodes of Varuna, Indra, Rudra, the Maruts and Ushanas, and to Brahma's world. He is on a supreme seat and is served by the daughters of the gods. He comprehends the form of the universe and gets to see the divine rishis known as the Bhurbhuvas. The daughters of the god of the gods offer him pleasure there. They are sweet and ornamented and can adopt thirty-two different types of forms. O lord! The brave one resides there for as long as the moon and the sun travel in the sky, subsisting on sudha and amrita. If a person eats one meal a day, that too on every eighteenth day, and if he does this for an entire year, he gets to see all the seven worlds. Chariots that thunder follow him at the rear. Beautiful and ornamented celestial maidens accompany him. He obtains great happiness astride a divine and excellent celestial vehicle that is yoked to tigers and lions and thunders like the clouds. With those maidens, he enjoys delight for one thousand kalpas. He subsists on the juice of sudha, which is like amrita. If a person eats only one meal a day on every nineteenth day and if he does this for an entire year, he gets to see all the seven worlds. He obtains an excellent region that is served by large numbers of apsaras, with the melodious songs of the gandharvas. He is on a celestial vehicle that is as radiant as the sun. Without any anxiety, he finds delight there, with those excellent women. He is handsome and wears divine garments. He is there for tens of thousands of years. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twentieth day, if he does this for an entire year, if he is truthful in speech and firm in his vows, if he is a brahmachari and does not eat flesh and if he is engaged in the welfare of all beings, he obtains the extensive and divine worlds of the Adityas. Gandharvas and apsaras, wearing divine garlands and fragrances, follow him on golden celestial vehicles. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-first day and if he offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, he goes to the divine world of Ushanas, Shakra's world and those of the Ashvins and the Maruts. He always finds happiness there and experiences no misery there. He is astride a supreme celestial vehicle, served by the best of women. The lord sports with them. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-second day, if he offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, if he has fortitude and is always devoted to non-violence and if he is truthful in speech and without malice, he obtains the world of the Vasus, which are as radiant as the sun. He is astride a supreme celestial vehicle. He subsists on sudha and can go anywhere at will. Adorned with divine ornaments, he finds pleasure with the maidens of the gods. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-third day, if he does this for a year and if he is restrained in diet and has conquered his senses, he goes to the worlds of Vayu, Ushanas and Rudra. He can go wherever he wants. He can travel

wherever he wants. He is worshipped by large numbers of apsaras. He is astride a supreme celestial vehicle and obtains many qualities. Adorned with divine ornaments, he finds pleasure with the maidens of the gods. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-fourth day and if he offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, he obtains delight for a long period of time in the world named after the Adityas. He wears divine garlands and garments and is smeared with celestial fragrances. He is on a beautiful and golden celestial vehicle that is drawn by swans. He finds delight with the daughters of the gods for crores of years. If a man eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-fifth day and if he does this for an entire year, he is astride a magnificient vehicle that is yoked to lions and tigers and which thunders like the clouds. Celestial maidens follow him at the rear on chariots that are silvery, sparkling and auspicious. He is astride that extremely beautiful and celestial vehicle. Surrounded by hundreds of women, he resides there for one thousand kalpas. He subsists on the juice of sudha, which is like excellent amrita. If a man eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-sixth day, if he is controlled and restrained in diet for an entire year, if he has conquered his senses and is devoid of attachment and if he offers oblations into the fire, that immensely fortunate one obtains a region where he is worshipped by a large number of apsaras. He obtains the seven worlds of the Vasus and the Maruts. He is astride a celestial vehicle that is made out of crystal, ornamented with all the jewels. He finds delight, worshipped by the gandharvas and the apsaras. With celestial energy, he dwells there for two thousand divine yugas. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-seventh day and if he offers oblations into the fire for an entire year, he obtains great fruits and is worshipped in the world of the gods. He resides there, subsisting on amrita. He finds happiness and all his thirst is extinguished. O king! He conducts himself like the divine rishis and the rajarshis. He resides there, astride a supreme celestial vehicle, divine in his soul. He obtains pleasure and pride, served by beautiful women. He dwells happily there for three thousand yugas and kalpas. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-eighth day, if he does this for an entire year and if he conquers his soul and conquers his senses, he obtains the pervasive fruits that lead to a conduct like that of the divine rishis. He obtains all the objects of pleasure. His sparkling energy is like that of the one with the one thousand rays.[342] The extremely radiant one finds delight with delicate women. Their breasts are large and their thighs are plump. They are adorned in celestial ornaments. He is astride a celestial vehicle that is as radiant as the sun and those beautiful women please him there. That celestial vehicle can go anywhere it wills. He resides there for one hundred thousand kalpas. If a person eats only one meal a day, that too on every twenty-ninth day and if he devotes himself to a vow of truth for an entire year, he obtains divine and auspicious worlds where he is worshipped by divine rishis and rajarshis. He travels on a celestial vehicle that has the complexion of the sun and the moon. It is made out of pure gold and is decorated with every kind of jewel. It is full of large numbers of apsaras and there are sounds of gandharvas singing. There are beautiful women who wear divine ornaments. They are sweet and bring delight to the mind. Proud and energetic, he finds pleasure with them. He obtains all the objects of pleasure and is full of energy. He is like the fire in his radiance. He is divine, with a celestial form, and his radiance is like that of the immortals. He goes to the worlds of the Vasus, the Maruts, the Sadhyas, the Ashvins and the Rudras, and to Brahma's world. If a person controls himself and eats only one meal a day, that too on every thirtieth day and if he does this for an entire year, he obtains Brahma's world. He subsists on the juice

of sudha. He is handsome and agreeable to everyone. The energy and prosperity of his form are as radiant as that of the one with the rays.[343] He is adorned in divine garlands and garments and is smeared with celestial fragrances. He is immersed in yoga. He enjoys happiness and does not know any misery. He obtains greatness astride his celestial vehicle and shines with his own radiance. The daughters of the Rudras and the divine rishis always worship him. They are capable of assuming many kinds of beautiful forms. They exhibit many different kinds of love. They speak in many kinds of sweet voices. They can cause pleasure in many different kinds of ways. He is astride a celestial vehicle that is like a city. It is like the sun and has the complexion of the sun. The chariots that follow him are like the moon. Those that are ahead of him are like the clouds. Those to his right are red. Those below him form a blue circle. Those above him are colourful. He resides there and is worshipped. That intelligent one is said to reside in Brahma's world for as many years as is the number of raindrops that shower down on Jambudvipa in the course of one thousand years. As many drops descend from the sky during the monsoon, for that number of years he resides there, with the radiance of an immortal. If a person fasts for an entire month and does this for ten years, he obtains the supreme state of heaven in his own body and gets the status of a maharshi. Such a sage is self-controlled and has always conquered his anger. He has also triumphed over his penis and his stomach. He is restrained and offers oblations into the fire. He follows the rites during the two sandhyas. If a man follows these diverse rituals and eats at the end of a month, because of his good conduct, he is said to dwell in a place that is as stainless as the clouds. O king! Like the immortals, he goes to heaven in his own body. Following the ordinances, he obtains heaven and all that is auspicious. He enjoys every object of desire. O foremost among the Bharata lineage! These are the rituals for supreme sacrifices. I have progressively explained them to you and also the fruits obtained from fasting. O Partha! Poor men can thus obtain the fruits of sacrifices. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! Having fasted, and devoted to worshipping gods and the brahmanas, they can go to the supreme destination. I have described in detail the rituals associated with fasting. Without distraction, the great-souled ones follow these rituals and purify themselves. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They turn their intelligence towards restraining insolence and hatred. They are steady and do not deviate. You should not have any doubt about this."'

## Chapter 1792(111)

'Yudhishthira said, "O grandfather! Tell me about what is best among all the tirthas, the place where one can obtain supreme purification. You should explain this to me."

'Bhishma replied, "The learned say that all the tirthas indeed possess qualities. Hear attentively about the tirtha that leads to purification. One should bathe in the tirtha of Manasa.[344] It is fathomless, sparkling and pure. It has truth as its water and fortitude as its lake. It is eternal and one must resort to its spirit. This tirtha leads to purification of the mind, uprightness, truthfulness, mildness, non-violence, lack of hatred towards all beings, self-control, tranquility, lack of ownership, lack of ego, freedom from opposite pairs of sentiments and lack of desire for possessions. One should seek alms at this tirtha of purification. A person who possesses this wealth of the truth and whose intelligence

has no sense of pride is said to be the supreme tirtha. In looking for signs of purity, one should look for them everywhere. The *rajas*, tamas and sattva in their atmans have been washed. Without considerations of purity and impurity, they follow the tasks of their own paths. They are devoted to renouncing everything. They know everything and can see everything. Through purity, they cleanse their impure conduct. They are the tirthas of purification. A person who has sprinkled his body with water isn't regarded as having bathed. A person who hasn't bathed through self-control hasn't really bathed. Purification isn't outside, but inside. They do not look towards what has happened in the past. They do not desire objects and have no sense of ownership. Those who have no desire are said to be the ones who are supremely pure. Wisdom is the special purification of the body. Freedom from desire and tranquility of the mind is also like that. Purity of conduct and purity of the mind are the pure tirthas that yield supreme benefit. The purification that results from knowledge is said to be the supreme purification. A person who uses the lamp of his mind and the strength of knowledge about the brahman is known to bathe in the tirtha of Manasa. He is the *kshetrajna* who knows. A person who always possesses these sentiments of purification and is only devoted to these qualities is a man who is always pure. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I have spoken about the tirthas that are in the body. Listen to the other sacred tirthas that exist on earth. Just as specific aspects of the body are said to be pure, there are sacred waters in parts of the earth too. By praying at these tirthas and bathing and offering oblations to the ancestors, one cleanses one's sins. Those sacred tirthas enable one to obtain happiness in heaven. Because of association with virtuous people and because of the earth's energy, those waters are extremely energetic and those regions are extremely auspicious. If one bathes in the sacred tirthas both of the mind and of the earth, one swiftly obtains success. Strength without exertion and exertion without strength are unable to ensure success in tasks. In that way, these two bring success together. Thus, both types, purification through the body and purification through tirthas, lead to success and represent supreme purification."'

## Chapter 1793(112)

'Yudhishthira said, "O grandfather! O mighty-armed one! O one who knows about all the sacred texts! I wish to hear about the supreme cycle of life that mortals have to go through. O Indra among kings! O king! In a battle, what kind of conduct ensures that men obtain supreme heaven and what conveys them to hell? When people die and give up this body, which is like a piece of wood or a lump of earth, and go to other worlds, who are the ones who follow them?"

'Bhishma replied, "The illustrious and extremely intelligent Brihaspati is arriving here. Ask the extremely fortunate one about this eternal mystery. No one other than him is capable of explaining this. There is no speaker who is Brihaspati's equal."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Partha and Gangeya were thus conversing with each other. The illustrious Brihaspati, pure in his soul, arrived there. With Dhritarashtra at the forefront, the king arose. All of them, including the advisers, worshipped him in an unmatched way. Following the prescribed method, the king who was Dharma's son, excellent in his vows, approached the illustrious Brihaspati and asked him a question.

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O illustrious one! O one who knows about every kind of dharma! O one who knows about all the sacred texts! Who is an aide to mortals? Is it the father, the mother, the son or the preceptor? When people die and give up the body, which is like a piece of wood or a lump of earth, and go to the world hereafter, who are the ones who follow them?”

‘Brihaspati replied, “O Indra among kings! A creature is born alone and is destroyed alone. He tides over hardships alone. He advances towards calamities alone. The father, the mother, the brother, the son, the preceptor, large numbers of kin and allies and large numbers of friends cannot be aides. When people die and give up this body, which is like a piece of wood or a lump of earth, those people remain for a while and then return. When the body is discarded, it is dharma alone that follows. Therefore, men must always serve dharma, which alone is the aide. A being who is full of dharma goes to supreme heaven. One who is full of adharma goes to hell. Therefore, a learned person always pursues artha that is obtained through dharma. In the world hereafter, dharma alone is the one who helps men. A man undertakes tasks because of greed, confusion, compassion and fear. Even if he is extremely learned, he is overcome by avarice and may do perverse deeds for the sake of others. Dharma, artha and kama—these are the three fruits of remaining alive. While avoiding adharma, one should try to obtain these three.”

‘Yudhishthira said, “O illustrious one! I have heard the extremely beneficial words that you have spoken and they are full of dharma. My intelligence now turns to what happens to the existence of the body.[345] After death, what remains of the body is subtle and unmanifest.[346] It can no longer be seen through the eye. How can dharma follow it?”

‘Brihaspati replied, “Earth, wind, space, water, light as the fifth, the intelligence, the atman and dharma always look on. These elements are incessant witnesses for beings.[347] Together with these, dharma follows the being.[348] O immensely intelligent one! The body that consists of skin, bones, flesh, semen and blood is abandoned when life is given up. However, if the being is full of dharma, it obtains happiness in this world[349] or in the next. What will I tell you about next?”

‘Yudhishthira said, “O illustrious one! You have instructed me about how dharma follows. I wish to know about how semen originates.”

‘Brihaspati replied, “O lord of men! The deities that are in the body, earth, air, space, water, light, and the mind, eat the food. O Indra among kings! Those five elements[350] are satisfied. This is also true of the mind, as the sixth. O one who is pure in his soul! This leads to the great semen being generated. O Partha! When a man and a woman unite, conception results from this. I have thus told you everything. What do you wish to hear next?”

‘Yudhishthira said, “O illustrious one! You have explained how conception results. Explain to me how a being is born and delivered thereafter.”

‘Brihaspati replied, “When the *jivatman* unites with the body, it is overcome by the elements. When it is freed from the elements,[351] it again goes to its supreme destination. The jivatman unites with the elements.[352] The deities who are in the five elements see all the good and the bad deeds. What do you wish to hear about next?”

‘Yudhishthira said, “O illustrious one! The jivatman casts aside the skin, bones and flesh and also abandons the elements. How can it then enjoy joy or misery?”

‘Brihaspati replied, “The jivatman is united with dharma and swiftly unites with the semen. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When it is time for women to ovulate, it unites and a birth results. A man must endure difficulties and misery in this cycle of life. Following Yama’s orders, Yama’s messengers endow the embryo with difficulties and the time of death. O king! From the time of birth in this world, a being has to enjoy the effects of his[353] own earlier deeds and the fruits of the dharma he has resorted to. Since his birth, if he has followed dharma to the best of his capacity, then when the man is reborn, he always enjoys happiness. However, if after following dharma, he has served the cause of adharma, the being will experience happiness first, followed by unhappiness subsequently. Full of adharma, the being will have to go to Yama’s dominion. Born as inferior species, he will have to endure great hardships. A being is overcome by confusion. Listen attentively to the different kinds of birth that result from different kinds of acts. This has been spoken about in the sacred texts and in the historical accounts. Those from the mortal world have to go to Yama’s terrible dominion. If a brahmana who has studied the four Vedas is overcome by confusion and accepts a gift from an outcast, he is reborn as a mule. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He lives as a mule for fifteen years. When he dies as a mule, he is reborn as a bull and lives in that state for seven years. When he dies as a bull, he is born as a Brahma-rakshasa. After living as a Brahma-rakshasa for three months, he is again born as a brahmana. A person[354] who acts as an officiating priest for an outcast is born as a worm. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He lives in that state for fifteen years. When he is freed from his state of a worm, he is reborn as a donkey. He lives as a donkey for five years and then again as a pig for five years. He next lives as a dog for one year. After that, he is reborn as a man. There is no doubt that a stupid disciple who injures his preceptor has to go through cycles of inferior birth. O Indra among kings! He is first born as a dog, then as a predatory beast and finally as a mule. After going through these hardships after death, he is then reborn as a brahmana. If a disciple has wicked intentions towards his preceptor’s wife, even in his mind, because of that adharma in his mind, he has to go through inferior transformations in this cycle of life. He is reborn as a dog and lives in that state for three years. When he dies, he is reborn as a worm. Having become a worm, he lives in that state for one year. When he dies, he gets his status of a brahmana back. If without any reason, a preceptor slays a disciple, who is like a son, because of that capricious act, he is born as a swan. O king! If a son disrespects his father or his mother, when he dies, the creature gives up his earlier form and is born as a donkey. He lives as a mule for ten months, as a dog for fourteen months and as a cat for seven months. After that, he is again born as human. O king! If a person abuses his mother or his father, he is reborn as a *sarika*.[355] If he strikes them, he is reborn as a tortoise. He lives as a tortoise for ten years and as a porcupine for three years. For six months, he is born as a snake. After that, he is reborn as human. If a person lives on food that a king provides, but overcome with delusion, injures his master, when he dies, he is born as a monkey. He is a monkey for ten years and a rat for three years. He then becomes a dog for six months. After that, he is reborn as human. A man who misappropriates what has been left to him in trust has to go through one hundred transformations in the cycle of life after reaching Yama’s dominion. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He is first born as a worm and lives in that state for fifteen years.[356] After that, when the evil deeds are exhausted, he is reborn as human. When a malicious man dies, he is born as a *sharngaka* bird. An evil-minded man who causes breach of trust is born as a fish. O descendant of the Bharata lineage!

After having been a fish for eight years, he is born as a deer. After having been a deer for four months, he is born as a goat. He dies after having lived as a goat for one year. The being is then born as a worm. It is after this that he is reborn as human. O great king! If a shameless and confused man whose senses are afflicted steals paddy, barley, sesamum, beans, pulses, mustard, chickpeas, groundnut, black gram, wheat, linseed and others kinds of grain, he is born as a rat. O great king! After he dies, he is reborn as a pig. O king! As soon as he is born as pig, he dies from disease. O king! Because of his foolish deeds, he is then born as a dog. After being in the state of a dog for five years, he is then reborn as human. If a person oppresses another person's wife, he is born as a wolf. After that, he is successively born as a dog, a jackal, a vulture, a snake, a heron and a stork. O king! If a confused and evil-minded person violates his brother's wife, he is born as a male cuckoo and lives in that state for a year. In that way, if a person is overcome by desire and violates a friend's wife, a preceptor's wife or a king's wife, when he dies, he is born as a pig. He spends five years as a pig and five years as a porcupine. He then becomes an ant for six months and a worm for one month. In addition, he has to spend cycles of birth as a worm. Spending one month in each life as a worm, he has to spend thirteen years as a worm. When the adharma has been extinguished, he is reborn as human. O lord! If a person presents himself and because of confusion, causes obstructions at a marriage, an act of donations or a sacrifice, when he dies, he is born as a worm. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He lives as a worm for fifteen years. When the adharma has been extinguished, he is reborn as human. O king! If a person has already promised his daughter to someone, but bestows her on a second person instead, when he dies, he is born as a worm. O Yudhishthira! He lives in that form for thirteen years. When the adharma has been extinguished, he is reborn as human. If a person eats without having completed the rites of oblation for the gods and the ancestors, he is born as a crow. After ten years as a crow, he is born as a cock. After being a snake for one month, he then becomes human. If a person disrespects his elder brother, who is like a father, when he dies, he is born as a crane. He lives as a crane for thirty-two months. When he dies, he becomes human again. A vrishala who has intercourse with a brahmana lady is born as a worm. However, if offspring have resulted, he is born as a rat. O king! When an ungrateful person dies and goes to Yama's dominion, he suffers extremely terrible afflictions in Yama's dominion. He is angrily struck there, with spears, clubs and tridents. He is flung into fierce pits of fire, forests that have swords as leaves, heated sands and *shalmali* trees that are covered with thorns. There are many other fires he has to face in Yama's dominion. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He confronts extremely sharp pain. He is then brought back into the cycle of life and is born as a worm. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He lives as a worm for fifteen years. After that, whenever he is born, he dies as a child. He goes through one hundred different births as different kinds of creatures. Having gone through many such cycles of existence, he is born as inferior species. After dying, he faces hardships for a very large number of years. He is then born as a senseless tortoise. Because of desire for riches or because of enmity, if a person who is armed kills a man who is unarmed, he is worst among men. When he dies, he is born as a mule. He lives as a mule for two years and is slain through the use of weapons. When he dies, he is born as a deer that is always anxious. After one year as a deer, he is slain through the use of weapons. After having died as a deer, he is born as a fish that lives for four months and is slain through the use of a net. He is then born as a predatory beast. After ten years as a predatory beast, he

becomes a leopard for five years. Goaded by the progress of time, he then confronts his death. When the adharma has been extinguished, he is reborn in human form. If an evil-minded person kills a woman, he faces many hardships when he goes to Yama's dominion. He goes through the cycle of life twenty times. O great king! After that, he is born as a worm. After twenty years as a worm, he is born as human. If a man steals food, he is born as a bee. He spends many months in the company of bees. When the sin has been extinguished, he becomes human again. If a man steals a musical instrument, he is born as a mosquito. If a man steals food mixed with sesamum cakes, he is born as a fierce rat, the size of the rat depending on how much was stolen. A person who steals salt is born as a cricket. A person who steals curd is born as a stork. A person who steals fish is born as an unclean frog. A person who steals water is born as a crane. A person who steals oil is born as a cockroach. An evil-minded person who steals honey is born as a gnat. An evil-minded person who steals iron is born as a crow. A person who steals payasam becomes a partridge. A person who steals cakes is born as an owl. A person who steals fruits, roots and cakes is born as an ant. An evil-minded person who steals brass is born as a pigeon. A person who steals a silver vessel is born as a dove. A person who steals a golden vessel is born as a worm. When a person who steals cotton dies, he is born as a heron. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a man steals jute, he becomes a sheep. If a person steals a woolen garment, he is born as a rabbit. If a man steals dyes, when he dies, he is born as a peacock. If a person steals red garments, he is born as a pheasant. O king! Overcome by greed, if a man steals pigments and fragrances, he is born as a mole. If a man violates trust and misappropriates what has been left with him, that man loses his lifespan and is born as a fish. After he dies as a fish, he is born as a man. However, though he becomes a man, he only has a short lifespan. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Men who perform wicked deeds are born as inferior species. They do not know any of the dharma that is there in their own souls. Having performed wicked deeds and having always ignored the vows, they suffer from disease and from joy and misery. There is no doubt that they are born as mlechchhas one should not associate with. Those are men who are wicked in conduct and are overcome by avarice and confusion. There are also men who avoid sin from the time they are born. They are handsome and prosperous and do not suffer from disease. Wicked women are also thought to go through the same kinds of progressions. They are born as the wives of the creatures that have been mentioned. I have recounted all the sins that come from stealing the possessions of others. O unblemished one! I have told you about this briefly. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In the course of some other conversation, you will hear about this again. O great king! In ancient times, Brahma told me about this. I asked him about it and he told me the truth, in the midst of the divine rishis. I have told you everything, just as it had been described to me. O great king! Having heard this, always turn your mind towards dharma and act accordingly."'

## Chapter 1794(113)

'Yudhishthira said, "O brahmana! O unblemished one! You have spoken to me about the progress of adharma. O supreme among eloquent ones! I wish to hear about the progress of dharma. Having performed wicked deeds, how can one go to the auspicious destination?"

‘Brihaspati replied, “Having performed wicked deeds, one comes under the subjugation of adharma. Because the mind is perverse, one goes to hell. However, having performed adharma out of delusion, a person may be tormented by this. If he turns his mind towards meditation, he does not have to suffer on account of those wicked deeds. If a man controls his mind and properly follows the dharma that has been spoken about, he is accordingly freed from his earlier anxieties. This is like a snake casting aside its skin. If one controls oneself, immerses one’s mind in meditation and gives away many kinds of gifts, one attains a desirable end. O Yudhishthira! I will speak about the objects that should be given. Having performed such tasks, a man becomes united with dharma. Among all kinds of donations, food is said to be the best. An upright person who desires dharma should first donate food. Food provides life to men and other creatures are also generated from it. All the worlds are established on food. That is how food manifests itself. The gods, the rishis, the ancestors and men praise food. It is by giving food that Koushika went to heaven. Cheerfully, excellent food that has been lawfully obtained must be given to brahmanas who are devoted to studying. When food is cheerfully given and it is eaten by one thousand brahmanas, the donor is not born as inferior species. O bull among men! If a man feeds ten thousand brahmanas, he is said to be always freed from all adharma and sin. If a brahmana follows the Vedas, invites another brahmana who is devoted to studying and gives him food as alms, he obtains happiness in this world. This is also true of a kshatriya who doesn’t injure brahmanas, always protects them according to law, and gives them food. O one with dharma in your soul! O Pandava! If a person is restrained and controlled and gives it to brahmanas who are aged in their knowledge of the Vedas, all his evil deeds are destroyed. If a vaishya gives a one-sixth share of his agricultural produce to brahmanas, he is purified and freed from his sins. A shudra can obtain food through hard labour, with risk to his life. If he gives this to brahmanas, he is cleansed and freed from sin. If a person takes food that he has grown, or has obtained through his own strength, without causing injury or without being deceitful, and gives it to brahmanas, he does not have to face any hardships. If a man is devoid of greed and gives lawfully earned food to brahmanas who are aged in their knowledge of the Vedas, he is freed from sin. Food leads to energy in this world. A man who donates it becomes energetic. By resorting to this path, followed by the virtuous, one is freed from all sins. The learned travel this path of making gifts. This is the eternal dharma of giving what is life itself. In every kind of situation, it is a man’s task to always give lawfully earned food to worthy recipients. Food leads to the ultimate destination. If a man donates food, he does not have to face hardships. Therefore, avoiding what is unlawful, food must be given. A householder must always eat after food has been offered to brahmanas first. If a man does not donate food on a certain day, that day becomes sterile. O king! If a man feeds one thousand brahmanas who know about the Vedas and right policy, are learned about dharma and also know about itihasa, then he does not go to hell, or undergo this terrible cycle of life. After death, he obtains the fruits that lead to the satisfaction of all the objects of desire. Without anxiety, in this way, he enjoys happiness and delight. He becomes handsome, famous and prosperous. I have thus told you everything about the great fruits from the donation of food. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This kind of gift is the foundation of dharma.”’

## Chapter 1795(114)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “What is best for a man—non-violence, the rites of the Vedas, meditation, controlling the senses, austerities or service to the preceptor?”

‘Brihaspati replied, “All of these are different gates to dharma. O bull among the Bharata lineage! I will talk about all six. Listen. I will tell you about what is supreme and best for creatures. If a man resorts to the dharma of non-violence, this man always restrains the three sins that characterize all creatures, desire, anger, and obtains success.[357] If a person desires happiness for himself, he should be non-violent towards beings and should not use the rod of chastisement against them. After death, he will then be happy. If a man looks upon all creatures as his own self, controls the rod and conquers his anger, he obtains happiness after death. He sees himself in all beings and all beings in his own self. Even the gods are confused in trying to follow his footsteps.[358] One should never do something to others that one would regard as an injury to one’s own self. In brief, this is dharma. Anything else is succumbing to desire. In refusing gifts, judging happiness and misery, the agreeable and the disagreeable, a man who desires success must use the yardstick of how it would affect him.[359] If one injures another person, one is in turn injured by that other person. In that way, if one loves another person, one is in turn loved by that other person. For the world of the living, this is the yardstick of dharma that has been instructed by the accomplished.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘The preceptor of the gods said this to Dharmaraja Yudhishthira. While they looked on, the intelligent one then went to heaven.’

## Chapter 1796(115)

Vaishampayana continued, ‘The grandfather was lying down on the bed of arrows. After this, the immensely energetic King Yudhishthira again asked the supreme among eloquent ones. “O immensely intelligent one! The rishis, the brahmanas and the gods cite the proofs laid down in the Vedas and praise the dharma that has signs of non-violence. O supreme among kings! However, if a man has indulged in violence, in deeds, words and thoughts, how can he be freed from the misery?”

‘Bhishma replied, “O slayer of enemies! Those who have spoken about the brahman have instructed that there are four kinds of non-violence and deviation from even one of these is not acceptable. All quadrupeds are incapable of standing on three legs. O protector of the earth! In that way, it is said that one cannot stand on only three. When others follow in the footsteps of an elephant, all their footprints are lost in the footprints left by the elephant. In that way, in this world, non-violence has been instructed as the supreme dharma. Creatures become attached to violence in deeds, words and thoughts. It must first be given up in the mind and then in words and deeds. Those who have spoken about the brahman have spoken about these three kinds of reasons. The sins are established in thoughts, words and taste.[360] Learned ones who are devoted to austerities do not eat flesh. O king! I will tell you about the sins attached to the eating of meat. Listen to me. Those who senselessly eat it, eat what is like the flesh of their own son. A son is born through the union of the mother and the father. In that way, the juices are united with the tongue and lead to discrimination.

That is the reason the sacred texts say that taste and attachment must be controlled.[361] Whether it is cooked well or not cooked well, whether there is salt in it or no salt in it, once one discriminates, those sentiments constrict the consciousness. After listening to the sounds of drums, conch shells and stringed musical instruments, how can those evil men eat meat? Having tasted the juices, there are those who praise meat and the fruits it leads to, describing it as inconceivable, unimaginable and impossible to describe. These are sinful acts and lead to consequent fruits. There are many virtuous people who protected the flesh of others and gave up their own flesh and their own lives instead. They went to heaven. O great king! These are the four traits of non-violent conduct. What I have instructed you has the essence of all dharma and artha."'

## Chapter 1797(116)

'Yudhishthira said, "You have said several times that non-violence is supreme dharma. However, you have also said that in funeral ceremonies, the ancestors desire meat. Earlier, you have spoken about funeral rites where many different kinds of meat are offered. Without causing injury or killing, how can meat be obtained? In giving up meat, there is thus a doubt that is created about dharma. What are the sins from eating meat and what are the qualities associated with not eating it? What if one eats something that has been seized or killed by another person? What if a man buys and eats meat from an animal that has been killed by some other person? I wish to determine the nature of eternal dharma. How does one obtain a long lifespan? How does one become spirited? How does one obtain faultless limbs? How is prosperity obtained?"

'Bhishma replied, "O king! O bull among the Kuru lineage! There is adharma attached to eating meat. Listen to the truth about the excellent ordinances that have been stated on this. It has been said that those who desire beauty, unblemished limbs, long lives, intelligence, spirit and strength and wish to cleanse their souls should abandon violence. O bull among the Kuru lineage! There have been many conversations between the rishis on this. O Yudhishthira! Listen to their views. O Yudhishthira! Every month, if a person is careful in his vows and avoids liquor and meat, he does what is equal to performing a horse sacrifice. O king! The learned ones, the saptarshis, the Valakhilyas and the rishis who subsist on air praise absention from eating meat. If a person does not eat meat, if he does not kill animals and does not cause others to kill him, he is a friend to all creatures. Svayambhuva Manu said this. Such a person is not oppressed by any creature and all beings trust him. A person who abandons meat is always revered by the virtuous. Narada, the one with dharma in his soul, has said that a person who desires to enhance his own flesh on the basis of the flesh of others, always faces hardships. Brihaspati has said that a person who abstains from liquor and meat is like an ascetic who donates and performs sacrifices. It is my view that two kinds of people are equal—those who perform a horse sacrifice every month for one hundred years and those who do not eat meat. A person who abandons liquor and meat is like one who always performs sacrifices, always gives donations and is a perennial ascetic. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If a person eats meat, but subsequently gives it up, he is like one who performs all the sacrifices indicated in all the Vedas. After one has savoured its taste, it is extremely difficult to give up meat. This act of granting life and freedom from fear to all beings is

superior to performing all the vows indicated in the four.[362] There is no doubt that a learned person who grants the dakshina of freedom from fear to all beings is a donor who grants life in this world. This is the supreme dharma praised by the learned. Those who desire their benefit see that the lives of all other beings are like their own lives. An intelligent, virtuous and great-souled person who desires his own prosperity must look upon all others as one's own self. Even the learned are scared of death. Why should one forcibly slay those who are trying to save their own lives? They are without disease and without sin. In trying to remain alive, why should one be wicked and subsist on their flesh? O great king! That is the reason meat must be avoided. This is the supreme aspect of dharma, heaven and joy. Non-violence is supreme dharma. Non-violence is the greatest austerity. Non-violence is supreme truth. Dharma flows from this. Meat cannot be obtained from grass, wood or stone. Meat is obtained by slaying animals. That is the sin attached to eating it. The gods love truth and uprightness and subsist on svaha, svadha and amrita. Know that predatory beasts and rakshasas are devoted to deceit and falsehood. O king! A person who does not eat meat does not face any fear in terrible and desolate spots, in deserted regions that are difficult of access, at crossroads and in assembly halls, during night and day and during the two sandhyas. If one is not an eater, then one is not a slayer either. A man becomes a slayer and slays because of food. Therefore, if one does not eat, one withdraws from violence too. It is because of food that there is violence towards deer and other animals. O immensely radiant one! This violence goes on because of devouring. Therefore, a person who desires his own prosperity must abstain from meat. Terrible people who cause violence to creatures will never find protectors. They will always be oppressed by creatures, like deer by beasts of prey. Men are attached to adharma because of greed, confusion of the intelligence, in search of strength and vigour and because of association with the wicked. If a person seeks to enhance his own flesh by eating the flesh of others, he always dwells in anxiety and is reborn as inferior species. The supreme rishis have always said that abstention from eating meat leads to prosperity, fame, long lives, heaven and great benedictions. O Kounteya! I heard everything about this earlier. Markandeya spoke about the sins associated with eating meat. If a person eats the flesh of animals that seek to remain alive, whether he slays them or whether they are already dead,[363] it is as if he himself is the slayer. There are three kinds of slaughter—killing by using wealth to purchase, killing by eating and directly killing by binding and slaying. Because of sinful sentiments, men eat food that is not sanctioned. Even if one sanctions slaughter, one is tainted with that sin. If one does not eat meat and is compassionate towards all creatures, one is not oppressed by any being. One obtains a long life. One is without disease and happy. The sacred texts have said that not eating meat is superior dharma to donating gold, donating cattle and donating land.

'"One should never eat futile meat that has not been offered in sacrifices, without following the rites. There is no doubt that a man who eats this will go to hell. Know that if one eats meat that has been offered at sacrifices or has been killed for the sake of brahmanas, there is a little bit of sin. However, by acting in a contrary way, one is touched by sin. A person who kills animals for someone else to eat is the worst among men. But the greater sin is attached to the eater, not to the killer. If an ignorant person wishes to follow the path of the rites and sacrifices laid down in the sacred texts, but nevertheless kills animals in a desire for their flesh, such a man goes to hell. If a man eats meat but subsequently refrains from it, he withdraws from sin and pursues extremely great dharma. One who

brings the meat, one who sanctions it, one who actually kills, one who buys and sells, one who cooks and one who eats—all of these are killers. I will now tell you about the proofs that have been laid down by the ordainer himself. The ancient rishis indicated their nature in the Vedas. O tiger among kings! It has been said that the dharma that is in the nature of pravritti, with a desire for obtaining the fruits, is not for those who are in pursuit of moksha. An oblation that has been sanctified with the mantras, even if it is in the form of meat that has been slaughtered, is pure. This is in accordance with the proofs cited in the Vedas and is used in rites for the ancestors. Manu has said that anything else is futile meat and must not be eaten. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O king! Anything else is the behaviour like that of a rakshasa. It does not lead to heaven or fame. A man must not eat meat that has not been sanctioned by those earlier ordinances. If a man desires to save himself from all kinds of extreme hardships, he must avoid the flesh of creatures in every form. It has been heard that in an earlier kalpa, men obtained the auspicious worlds by performing sacrifices with grain, regarding this as equivalent to animals. In ancient times, the rishis had a doubt and went and asked Vasu, the king of the Chedis. O lord! Though he knew that meat should not be eaten, he said that it could be eaten. Because of this, that king fell down from the sky onto the ground. When he again repeated his view, he penetrated into the nether regions of the earth. For the welfare of the subjects, the great-souled Agastya used the power of his austerities to dedicate deer and other wild animals to all the gods. Therefore, the rites do not suffer if these are not offered to the ancestors and the gods. The ancestors are delighted, even if their satisfaction is not through meat. O Indra among kings! O unblemished one! Listen to what I am recounting. O lord of men! There are all kinds of happiness associated with not eating meat. It is my view that if a person torments himself through extremely difficult austerities for one hundred years and if a person gives up meat, both of them are equal. O lord of men! Especially during shuklapaksha in the month of Koumudi,[364] one must avoid all kinds of meat. That is ordained by dharma. Meat must also be avoided during the four months of the monsoon. A person will then obtain four kinds of fortune—deeds, a long life, fame and strength. If, in addition, a person does not eat any kind of meat for several months, he overcomes all types of misery. He is happy and possesses good health. If a person abstains from meat for several months or pakshas at a stretch, thus refraining from violence, Brahma's world is ordained for him. O Partha! Kings who regarded all beings as their own selves and knew about the supremely desired objective, avoided meat during the month of Koumudi and the paksha mentioned. O Indra among kings! These were Nabhaga, Ambarisha, the great-souled Gaya, Ayu, Anaranya, Dilipa, Raghu, Puru, Kartavirya, Aniruddha, Nahusha, Yayati, Nriga, Vishvagshvena, Shashabindu, Yuvanashva, Shibi, the son of Ushinara, Shvyenachitra, Somaka, Vrika, Raivata, Rantideva, Vasu, Srinjaya, Dushsanta, Karusha, Rama, Alarka, Nala, Virupashva, Nimi, the intelligent Janaka, Sila, Prithu, Virasena, Ikshvaku, Shambhu, Shveta, Sagara and many others. O Indra among kings! In earlier times, they did not eat meat during the bright part of the month of Koumudi and went to heaven.[365] Blazing in their prosperity, they remained in Brahma's world. They were worshipped and revered by gandharvas and thousands of women. Thus, non-violence is supreme dharma and is associated with all the auspicious signs. Great-souled ones who act accordingly reside in the vault of heaven. There are those who are devoted to dharma and always avoid liquor and meat. Since birth, they avoid all kinds of liquor and they are said to be sages. There is no doubt that they become superior to all their kin. They are freed from all kinds

of calamities that present themselves. They are freed when they are bound down. They are freed from affliction and disease. They are freed from misery and grief. Such a man is always handsome and does not have to be born as inferior species. O best among the Kuru lineage! He is intelligent and obtains great fame. O king! I have thus spoken to you about the avoidance of meat and also about the ordinances of pravritti and *nivritti* laid down by the rishis."'

## Chapter 1798(117)

'Yudhishthira said, "In this world, men are extremely desirous of flesh and give up many other kinds of food instead. They behave like many rakshasas. There are many kinds of cakes and different forms of vegetables, full of juices and succulent. But they do not desire them as much as they crave for meat. My mind is confused because of this. I think that the taste associated with meat must be superior. O bull among men! I wish to hear about the qualities that are associated with not eating meat and about the sins associated with eating it. O one who knows about dharma! You know the truth about everything. Tell me about what is in conformity with dharma. What should be eaten? What should not be eaten? Tell me everything."

'Bhishma replied, "O mighty-armed one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is exactly as you have said. There is nothing on earth that is superior to meat in taste. There is nothing superior to meat for those who are wounded, weak, afflicted, exhausted from travels and those who are addicted to sexual desire. It instantly enhances the life force and provides the best means of sustenance. O scorcher of enemies! There is no food that is superior to meat. O descendant of the Kourava lineage! However, there are many qualities associated with giving it up and they manifest themselves in men. Listen to this attentively. If there is a man who desires to enhance his own flesh by resorting to the flesh of others, there is no one who is inferior or more cruel than him. In this world, there is nothing as loved as one's own life. Therefore, a man must act towards others, as he would towards his own self. O son! There is no doubt that flesh originates in semen. That is the reason it is said that there are great sins in eating and killing it. Learned ones who know about the Vedas have said that non-violence is a characteristic of dharma. Therefore, one should resort to non-violence. A man must act towards others as he would towards his own self. It has been said that slaughtered animals are oblations offered to the ancestors and the gods in sacrifices. If this is in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas, then there can be no sin attached to eating it. It has been heard in the sacred texts that animals were created for the purpose of sacrifices. Those who do not follow these ordinances are said to be rakshasas. Listen to the ordinances that have been laid down for kshatriyas. If they eat meat that has been obtained through their own valour, they do not incur any sin. All deer and wild animals are said to have been dedicated to all the gods. O king! This was done by Agastya in ancient times and that is the reason hunting is praised. There can be no hunting without being prepared to give up one's own life. O king! There is thus no difference in form between the one who is killing and the one who is being killed. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! That is the reason all the rajarshis went on hunts. The learned say that this does not lead to their being tainted by any sin. O descendant of the Kourava lineage! In this world and in the next world, there is nothing superior to compassion towards all

creatures. A man who is compassionate does not suffer from any fear. In this world and in the next world, those who are compassionate are ascetics. Those who are compassionate grant all creatures freedom from fear. We have heard that no being causes them fear either. Whether he is wounded, fallen down, prostrate, afflicted or hurt, whether it is plain or uneven terrain, all creatures protect him. Snakes, animals, pishachas and rakshasas do not strike him. Even if there is an occasion for fear, he is freed and he frees others too. There has not been, nor will there be, any donation that is superior to the granting of life. It is certain that there is nothing more loved than one's own life. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Causing injury to any being is thus nothing but another name for death. When the time for death arrives, all creatures tremble. In this ocean of life, creatures are whirled around and agitated through conception, birth, old age, misery and death. While dwelling in the womb, they are cooked in juices that are astringent, acidic and bitter, with the extremely terrible touch of urine, phlegm and excrement. In that stage of an embryo, they are helpless and are repeatedly struck. Because they desire flesh, in that helpless state, they are seen to be brought down. Having been born as different kinds of species, they are cooked in the hell known as Kumbhipaka.[366] Being born and killed, a creature is repeatedly whirled around. When one arrives on earth, there is nothing as loved as one's own life. Therefore, one should be compassionate towards all beings and look upon them as one's own self. O king! If a person does not eat any kind of flesh from the moment of his birth, there is no doubt that he obtains an extensive spot in heaven. In a desire to remain alive, if a person eats the flesh of other creatures, there is no doubt that those other creatures will devour him. 'Whomever I eat, that creature will eat me.'[367] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Know that it is my view that this is how the word for meat has evolved. A slayer is always killed. A person who binds is bound. O king! A person who injures is injured. One who hates faces hatred. Whatever deeds are performed in whatever kind of body, in exactly that kind of body are the fruits enjoyed.[368] Non-violence is supreme dharma. Non-violence is supreme self-control. Non-violence is supreme donation. Non-violence is supreme austerity. Non-violence is supreme sacrifice. Non-violence is supreme strength. Non-violence is supreme friendship. Non-violence is supreme happiness. Non-violence is supreme truth. Non-violence is supreme learning. Among donations made at all the sacrifices, bathing at all the tirthas and the fruits of all kinds of donations, there is nothing that is equal to non-violence. The austerities of a person who is non-violent are inexhaustible. A non-violent person is like one who always performs sacrifices. A person who is non-violent towards all beings is like their mother and their father. O bull among the Kuru lineage! These are the many fruits of non-violence. I am incapable of speaking about all its qualities, even if I were to speak for one hundred years."'

## Chapter 1799 (118)

'Yudhishthira said, "Whether they desired it, or whether they did not desire it, there are those who were slain in this great battle. O grandfather! What species will they be born as? In this great battle, men gave up their lives amidst hardships. O one who knows about dharma! I know that the giving up of life is an extremely difficult task. It is my view that you know everything. Why is that the case, regardless of whether there is prosperity or adversity, or whether there is good or bad?"

‘Bhishma replied, “O lord of the earth! Whether there is prosperity or adversity, whether there is good or bad, creatures born in this cycle of life follow a certain conduct. They exhibit a certain sentiment. Listen to the reason. O Yudhishthira! The question that you have asked me is an extremely appropriate one. O king! In this connection, there is an ancient account. O Yudhishthira! This is a conversation between Dvaipayana and a worm. In ancient times the brahmana Krishna Dvaipayana, the essence of the brahman, was roaming around. He saw a worm swiftly advancing along a road that was meant for carts. He knew about the progress of all creatures and could speak the languages of all embodied beings. The one who knew everything and could see everything spoke to the worm in these words. ‘O worm! You seem to be frightened and I can see that you are hurrying? Tell me. Why are you running? Where has this fear come from?’

‘“The worm replied, ‘My fear results from having heard the great roar of a cart. O immensely intelligent one! That terrible sound is approaching. I have heard it. It will kill me. That is the reason I am making efforts. I can also hear the sighs of the bulls as they are being goaded. O lord! They are bearing a great load and I can hear that sound approaching. I can hear many kinds of sounds being made by men who are urging the mounts. For those who have been born as worms, these kinds of sounds are intolerable. I face an extremely terrible fear and that is the reason I am making efforts. Life is extremely difficult to get and all creatures are miserable at the prospect of death. I am therefore running away in fear. From a state of happiness, I do not wish to confront a state of unhappiness.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “Thus addressed, he[369] replied, ‘O worm! What will bring you happiness? Since you have been born as inferior species, I think that death should bring you happiness. O worm! You cannot experience sound, touch, taste, smell, speech and many kinds of pleasure. For you, there can be nothing better than death.’

‘“The worm replied, ‘Whatever be the state, a living being is devoted to that state. O immensely wise one! I sense that this represents my happiness and that is the reason I wish to remain alive. Everything that I value results from my present body. Men and those who are inferior in species differ in what brings them pleasure. In earlier times, I was also a man. I was an extremely rich shudra. I was not a brahmana. I was cruel and wicked in the means I used to earn subsistence. I was harsh in speech. I was deceitful and unwise. I hated everything in the universe. I violated agreements in pursuit of riches. I was devoted to appropriating the possessions of others. In my household, I did not tend to servants and guests. I was malicious and cruel and desired to keep the tasty objects for myself. I did not faithfully offer food at sacrifices meant for the gods and the ancestors. I did not desire to give any riches. Nor did I give any food. I did not protect frightened people who sought refuge and sought protection with me. I violently cast aside those who were terrified. I did not save those who were frightened. On seeing the prosperity of other men, their riches, grain, beloved wives, vehicles and wonderful houses, I indulged in futile acts of jealousy. I was jealous on seeing the prosperity of others and I desired that they might suffer. Following my own caprices, I sought to destroy the three objectives[370] of others. Earlier, I engaged in these acts, driven by the many qualities of cruelty. Remembering that, I am tormented, just as one is at having to give up a beloved son. I have not known the fruits of any auspicious deeds I performed. But I worshipped my aged mother and on one occasion, I worshipped a brahmana, when he came to my house. He possessed the qualities of good

conduct. Since I worshipped that brahmana as a guest, I have not lost my memory. It is evident that good act has led to this bit of happiness. O one rich in austerities! I wish to hear from you the truth about what will be best for me.’”’

## Chapter 1800 (119)

“‘Vyasa said, ‘Though you have been born as inferior species, V it is because of that good deed that you have not been confused. O worm! It is because of that deed that you are not confused and have met me. Now that you have met me, I can save you through the strength of my austerities. There is no other strength that is stronger than the strength of austerities. O worm! I know that you have been born as a worm because of your own wicked deeds. However, if you wish to base yourself on dharma, resort to what is supreme dharma. Because of their deeds, gods also have to come down to earth, or are born as inferior species. Among men, there are the qualities of dharma, kama and artha. A learned person desires speech, intelligence, hands and feet. What can be worse for a man than to resort to this evil kind of life?[371] As long as one is alive on this earth, a foremost brahmana is one who worships the moon and the sun and speaks about the auspicious accounts. O worm! You will become that. You will be freed and will enjoy all those qualities of creatures. I will convey you to that status of being a brahmana, which is what you desire.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “Having agreed to this, the worm remained where it was.[372] It went through birth in all the other kinds of species—porcupine, lizard, boar, animal, bird, shvapaka, vaishya and finally, kshatriya. He went and met the rishi and reported everything to him. He remembered how he had been a worm. He joined his hands in salutation and touched the feet of the rishi, who was truthful in speech, with his head. The worm said, ‘My present state is unmatched and possesses ten times the qualities I had desired. I was earlier a worm, but have become a prince now. Extremely strong elephants, with golden harnesses, bear me. Supreme horses from Kamboja are yoked to my chariot. The vehicles that bear me are yoked to camels and mules. With my relatives and advisers, I eat food that is mixed with meat. I happily sleep on beds in excellent houses. O immensely fortunate one! While I sleep in the second half of the night, I am extremely honoured. In the second half of the night, all the bards, raconteurs and minstrels chant my praises and speak pleasantly to me, as if I am the great Indra of the gods. O one who is devoted to the truth! O infinitely energetic one! All this is because of your favours. I used to be a worm, but have now become a prince. O immensely wise one! I bow down before you. Instruct me about what I should do. In truth, everything that has happened to me has occurred because of the strength of your austerities.’ Vyasa replied, ‘O king! As you chose, you have now worshipped me with eloquent words. Even when you were a worm, you retained your memory and that has now come back. The wicked deeds that you committed earlier have not yet been extinguished. You were a shudra who primarily desired riches. You were cruel and an assassin. You performed a good deed in earlier times and that is the reason you have met me now. Though you were born as inferior species, you worshipped me. O prince! Because of that, you will obtain the status of becoming a brahmana. In the field of battle, you will give up your life for the sake of cows and brahmanas. Enjoy the happiness of being a prince. Perform sacrifices and give away dakshina.

Immersed with the brahman, enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. Those born as inferior species become shudras. Shudras become vaishyas and vaishyas become kshatriyas. A kshatriya who discharges his conduct proudly becomes a brahmana. A brahmana who is virtuous in his conduct goes to the sacred heaven.’”’

## Chapter 1801 (120)

‘Bhishma said, “O king! Having given up the state of being a worm, he became a kshatriya and followed that dharma. However, the valiant one remembered and performed extensive austerities. Krishna Dvaipayana, foremost among brahmanas and learned about dharma and artha, saw his extensive austerities and arrived there.

‘“Vyasa said, ‘O worm! The vow of a kshatriya is to protect all creatures. If you observe the vow meant for a kshatriya, you will then become a brahmana. In your own self, know what is good and bad, and save all the subjects properly. Share everything that is auspicious. Purify everything that is inauspicious. Be cheerfully immersed in your own soul. Follow your own dharma. Once you give up the body of a kshatriya, you will become a brahmana.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “O Yudhishthira! He had actually retired to the forest. However, hearing the maharshi’s words, he returned and began to protect the subjects, following dharma. O supreme among kings! The worm continued to follow the dharma of protecting the subjects. After a short period of time, he died and became a brahmana. The immensely wise and immensely illustrious Krishna Dvaipayana saw the brahmana and again arrived there.

‘“Vyasa said, ‘O brahmana rishi! O handsome one! Never be distressed. A person who performs good deeds obtains a good birth. One who performs wicked deeds obtains a wicked birth. O one who knows about dharma! You will obtain the dharma that has been laid down in the sacred texts. O worm! Therefore, on no account, should you ever be distressed at the prospect of death. The only fear is about the destruction of dharma. Therefore, follow supreme dharma.’

‘“The worm replied, ‘O illustrious one! Because of what you have done, I have moved from happiness to greater happiness. With the foundation of dharma, I have obtained this prosperity. My sins have now been destroyed.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “Because of the illustrious one’s words, the worm obtained the status of a brahmana, which is extremely difficult to get. O king! He marked out the earth with many sacrificial altars. The excellent brahmana then went to Brahma’s world. O Partha! The worm obtained the supreme state of the eternal brahman. Because of Vyasa’s words, the fruits of his own deeds were extinguished. The bulls among kshatriyas have followed their own natures and have been slain. They have obtained auspicious ends. O son! Therefore, do not grieve about them.”’

## Chapter 1802 (121)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “Learning, austerities and donations—which among these is superior? O best among virtuous ones! I am asking you. O grandfather! Tell me this.”

‘Bhishma replied, “In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Maitreya and Krishna Dvaipayana. O king! Once, Krishna Dvaipayana was wandering around in disguise. He arrived in Varanasi and came to Maitreya, who was from an independent lineage.[373] That supreme sage was seated. However, seeing that he had arrived, Maitreya worshipped him and fed him excellent food. That excellent food possessed all the qualities and he ate it. The great-minded Krishna was seated. He smiled happily. On seeing him smile, Maitreya spoke to Krishna. ‘O one with dharma in your soul! Tell me the reason why you are smiling. You are an ascetic. You are firm in your intelligence. And yet, you are overcome by delight. O learned one! I am bowing down my head before you and am asking you. I have myself earned fortune through my austerities. Indeed, I have obtained great fortune. O father![374] Our conducts are different and the title you bear is different from the title I bear. But that apart, I think there is little difference between us. Indeed, I think I am superior to you.’

‘“Vyasa replied, ‘I smiled because I remembered hyperbolic and paradoxical statements.[375] The words of the Vedas seem to be false. However, why should the Vedas utter a falsehood? There are three modes that are said to represent the supreme vow for a man—lack of hatred, gifts and finally, speaking the truth. These are the supreme words of the ancient sacred texts and even now, we should act in accordance with them. Even a little bit of donations, given in this way, gives rise to great fruits. Without any malice in your heart, you have given a drink to a person who was thirsty. Though you were thirsty, you gave a thirsty man a drink. You gave me food. O lord! You have thus conquered great worlds, as if you have performed a great sacrifice. I am pleased with you because of your sacred gift and because of your austerities. Your scent is auspicious. Your sight is auspicious. I think that the wind bears this sacred fragrance because of the dutiful acts you have performed. O son! This is superior to all the bathing and all the smearing of unguents. Among all the things that are sacred and auspicious, donations are supreme. Had they not been excellent, the words of the Vedas would not have praised them. There is no doubt that gifts are the best. Learned people travel along the paths followed by those who make gifts. Those who donate grant life. They are established in dharma. Among those who study the Vedas, those who control their senses and those who renounce everything, those who donate are the best. O son! From this state of happiness, you will rise to another state of happiness that is even more beautiful. It is my view that a man thus moves from bliss to greater bliss. There is no doubt that we have experienced many direct manifestations of what has been spoken about in the Vedas. Prosperous people obtain greater riches. They donate, perform sacrifices and obtain happiness. O immensely wise one! It can be seen that unhappiness follows happiness and happiness follows unhappiness. This is natural progression. Learned people have ordained that a man must follow three kinds of conduct—some are good, some are wicked and some are neither good, nor wicked. I do not think there is any other kind of conduct. However, there is a conduct that is not sinful. For example, a person who is engaged in his own tasks does neither good, nor evil. Find delight. Find pleasure. Donate and perform sacrifices. Even those who are learned and ascetic will not be able to surpass you.’”’

## Chapter 1803(122)

‘Bhishma said, “Maitreya was born in an extremely prosperous family. He was wise and extremely learned. He was also one who valued rites. Thus addressed, he replied, ‘O immensely wise one! There is no doubt that it is exactly as you have described it. O lord! However, with your permission, I wish to say something.’

‘“‘Vyasa replied, ‘O Maitreya! O immensely wise one! Say whatever you wish to. Speak. I wish to hear your words.’

‘“‘Maitreya said, ‘Your words on gifts are blameless and pure. There is no doubt that your soul has been cleansed through learning and austerities. Since your soul has been cleansed, I can obtain a great advantage from this. Using my intelligence, I can see that you are extremely prosperous in austerities. O god! I think this great opportunity of my being able to see you is because of your favours and because of the rites I have naturally performed. Austerities, learning and birth—these are the three ways of becoming a brahmana. It is through these three qualities that one obtains the status of being a brahmana. Therefore, when he[376] is satisfied, the ancestors and the gods are also satisfied. There is no one superior to a brahmana in knowledge. Men obtain fruits from a field that has been ploughed well. In that way, a donor obtains fruits when the recipient is learned. Had there not been a brahmana with learning and good conduct as a recipient, the donations of riches by a wealthy person would have been useless. When an ignorant brahmana eats, he destroys the food that he eats and also destroys the donor. Such an ignorant person destroys the food and also destroys the person who is doing the eating. A learned lord digests the food and the lord again regenerates it. In the absence of learning, the food is not regenerated and this is a difference that is more than subtle. Merits are obtained both by the donor and by the recipient and do not devolve only on a single one. This is what the learned rishis have said. If donations are made to learned brahmanas who are controlled and have good conduct, then the auspicious fruits are obtained in this world and in the next. There are those who are pure in lineage and are always devoted to severe austerities. They are engaged in donations and studying. They should always be worshipped. These are the paths followed by the virtuous and one is not confused if one treads that way. They have nurtured the eternal sacrifices and have conveyed people to heaven.’”’

## Chapter 1804(123)

‘Bhishma said, “Thus addressed, the illustrious one[377] replied to Maitreya. ‘It is through good fortune that you possess learning. It is through good fortune that your intelligence is like this. In this world, these qualities are repeatedly praised. There is no doubt that beautiful, young and prosperous people cannot surpass you and that is because of good fortune. The gods have shown you their favours. There is something that is superior to donations. Listen. All the rites of pravritti described in the sacred texts and all the other kinds of pravritti that have progressively evolved, are based on the primacy of the Vedas. I praise donations. You praise austerities and learning. Austerites

are sacred. Austerities are the means to acquire the Vedas and heaven. We have heard that greatness can be obtained through austerities and learning. It is through austerities that all the evil acts can be destroyed. However, whatever a man obtains by tormenting himself with austerities can also be obtained by a brahmana who is accomplished in the Vedas. Anything that is difficult to do, anything that is difficult to conquer, anything that is difficult to get and anything that is difficult to cross—all these can be obtained through austerities. Austerities are supremely strong. A person who drinks liquor, a person who violates agreements and seizes, a person who kills a foetus and a person who has intercourse with his preceptor's wife—can be freed from all the sins through austerities. A person with all kinds of knowledge has true sight. He can see what cannot be seen. Both of them[378] are ascetics and one must always bow down before them. All those who possess learning are ascetics and must be worshipped. A person who donates obtains happiness and prosperity in this world and in the next. Those who perform the good deed of donating food obtain this world and other worlds, Brahma's world and worlds that are superior to that. They should be worshipped and are worshipped. They should be revered and are revered. A donor is praised wherever he goes.[379] Gains are proportionate to what one does and what one does not do. Whether one resides in the upper regions or whether one resides in the lower regions, worlds are accordingly obtained.[380] You will obtain the food and the drink that you yourself give. You possess intelligence. You have been born in a noble lineage. You are learned. You are not cruel. O Maitreya! Always be devoted to the vow of being celibate and not taking a wife. In addition, receive this instruction about what is primarily praised for a householder. When the wife is pleased with her husband and when the husband is pleased with his wife, in that family, all will be well. Water washes away dirt from the body. The radiance of the fire dispels darkness. In that way, all sins are cleansed through donations and austerities. O Maitreya! May you be well. May all be well in your house. I will depart. You should retain this in your mind and you will obtain benefit.' Maitreya bowed down before him and circumambulated him. He joined his hands in salutation before the illustrious one and pronounced benedictions for him."'

## Chapter 1805(124)

'Yudhishthira said, "O supreme among those who uphold all kinds of dharma! I wish to hear about the good conduct of virtuous women. O grandfather. Tell me the truth."

'Bhishma replied, "There was a lady named Sumana, from the Kaikeya lineage. Shandili knew about everything and about all kinds of dharma. In the world of the gods, she asked the spirited one.[381] 'O fortunate one! What conduct did you follow? How did you cleanse all your sins and arrive in the world of the gods? You are blazing in your own energy, like the flames of a fire. You seem to be like a daughter of the lord of the stars,[382] creating day with your own radiance. You are clad in a white garment and you show no signs of exhaustion. You are resplendent astride a sparkling celestial vehicle and there are one thousand qualities in your energy. Your austerities, donations and rituals cannot have been minor, since you have obtained this world. Therefore, tell me the truth.' The one with the sweet smiles was thus gently asked by Sumana.

‘“In private, Shandili spoke these words to Sumana. ‘I did not wear ochre robes. I did not dress myself in bark. I did not shave my head, nor did I sport matted hair. That is not the reason I have obtained divinity. In a fit of distraction, I never addressed my husband in any hurtful or harsh words. I worshipped the gods, the ancestors and brahmanas. I was never careless and served my father-in-law and my mother-in-law. I never allowed any calumny to penetrate my mind. I never stood at the door, speaking to someone for a long period of time. I did not laugh when a wicked act was performed. I did not perform any injurious acts. I never divulged a secret, or what was not a secret. When my husband went out for work and returned home, I was controlled and honoured him by offering him a seat. I did not eat food that he did not know about, or did not approve of. I avoided anything like that, whether it was eaten, swallowed or licked. I arose in the morning and performed all the tasks that needed to be done to honour the relatives. If my husband had to go elsewhere on some task, I always remained engaged in tasks that would bring many benedictions. Until my husband returned, I did not use beautiful collyrium, wear garlands and apply fragrances after bathing, or ornament myself. I never awoke my husband when he was happily asleep. I satisfied my mind by undertaking tasks for the afflicted. For the sake of the family, I did not urge my husband to exert himself. I never divulged secrets and I kept the household clean. If a woman is controlled and protects this path of dharma, she will obtain greatness in heaven, just as Arundhati did amongst all the women.’ The ascetic goddess recited this account to Sumana. The immensely fortunate one described this dharma towards the husband and instantly disappeared. O Pandava! A person who reads this account on an auspicious occasion obtains the world of the gods and resides in great happiness in Nandana.”’

## Chapter 1806(125)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O foremost among the Bharata lineage! What is superior, conciliation or gifts? Tell me which you think is better.”

‘Bhishma replied, “Some are pleased through conciliation, others are pleased through gifts. One must secure a man’s devotion after ascertaining his nature. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Listen to the qualities that are associated with conciliation. The most terrible of creatures can be pacified through conciliation. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted. In a forest, a brahmana who was seized by a rakshasa was freed. There was an intelligent brahmana. In a desolate forest, he confronted a catastrophe because he was seized by a rakshasa who intended to eat him. However, he possessed intelligence and learning. Despite seeing that terrible creature, he was not confused or distressed. Instead, he resorted to conciliation. Having honoured him with his words, the rakshasa asked the brahmana a question. ‘I will free you if you can answer my question. Why am I yellowish green and lean?’ The brahmana thought for an instant about the purport of the rakshasa’s anxious question.

‘“He then replied, ‘You reside away from home. You are alone and without any of your well-wishers, though you command an unmatched territory. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. O rakshasa! Though you are virtuous, there is no doubt that your friends, because of their own wickedness, have acted perversely against you. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean.

You possess an excess of prosperity and wealth and you stupefy them with your supreme and excellent qualities. Nevertheless, they disregard you. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You have performed good deeds and possess the qualities. You can see that they don't have the qualities. You are wise. They are foolish and uncontrolled in their souls. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. Though you are afflicted because of lack subsistence, you have avoided the censured means of subsistence. This has resulted from your greatness. There is no doubt that this is the reason why you are yellowish green and lean. You have chosen to suffer because of your own noble qualities. But you are disregarded by the others, who think that they have defeated you. O virtuous one! That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There are those who suffer because they resort to deviant paths, overcome by the desire and the anger in their souls. I think you are reflecting about those people. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. Though you have obtained everything, you have to adopt the form of one who has obtained nothing. Though you are humble, those who are evil in conduct exhibit their intolerance towards you. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There was an enemy who arrived before you, pretending to be a friend. He first acted nobly. Subsequently, he deceived you and left. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There is no doubt that you know about the purport and progress of everything that is manifest. You are skilled in the mysteries and accomplished. But those people do not honour you. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You remained among wicked people and spoke to them, clearing their doubts. Nevertheless, they did not praise your qualities. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You do not possess riches, intelligence and learning. Despite this, on the basis of your energy, you aspire to obtain greatness. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. I think that you have controlled your soul and desire to roam around in this forest in the pursuit of austerities. But your numerous friends are not prepared to accept this. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. At the right time, when you spoke excellent words amidst rich people, they were not applauded. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There is a stupid and angry person whom you love from your heart. Though you have firmly instructed him and entreated him, you have been unsuccessful. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There is no doubt that someone urged you to undertake a task. But once the objective has been attained, he is trying to appropriate it. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There is no doubt that your well-wishers only honour you for your own sake, ignoring the qualities that you naturally possess. Knowing this, you are yellowish green and lean. There is no doubt that you are ashamed. Consequently, you are unable to divulge your intentions and desires. Therefore, you are lax in pursuing what you want. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. In this world, there are many kinds of men, with diverse intelligence and inclinations. You wish to persuade them with your own qualities, but are unable. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You are without learning. You are timid. You possess limited riches. You seek to obtain fame on the basis of learning, valour and donations. There is no doubt that this is the reason why you are yellowish green and lean. There is a fruit that you have desired for a long time, but have not been able to get. What you obtained was stolen by others. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There is no doubt that you are unable to see any taints in yourself or anything wrong in what you have done. You are abused without reason. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. Your well-wishers are miserable

and afflicted. They lack riches and qualities and you wish to free them from their destitution. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You see virtuous people in the householder mode and wicked people roaming around in the forest. Those who are emancipated have become attached to houses. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. The words you speak are full of dharma and artha and are appropriate to the time and the place. But they are not accepted. There is no doubt this is the reason why you are yellowish green and lean. You are learned. However, wishing to remain alive, you have accepted riches from a unaccomplished donor. There is no doubt that you are yellowish green and lean because you accepted that. It is certain that when you are engaged in hunting, you can see wickedness flourish and the good suffer. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. You wish to do what is agreeable towards well-wishers who are in conflict and act against each other. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean. There are learned and wise people who are unable to control their senses. I think that you reflect about their indulging in perverse deeds. That is the reason you are yellowish green and lean.' Thus honoured, the rakshasa honoured the brahmana back in return. He made him a friend, gave him riches and released him."'

## Chapter 1807(126)

'Yudhishthira said, "O grandfather! O immensely wise one! O one who is accomplished in all the sacred texts! You are the one who is famous in our lineage. There are many kinds of extensive sacred texts. They are about the truth of dharma and artha and about how happiness can be brought. O destroyer of enemies! I wish to hear about the wonderful worlds that can be obtained. A time has arrived when kin and friends are extremely difficult to find. O bull among the Bharata lineage! With your exception, there is no one else who can instruct us. O unblemished one! O king! If you wish to show me and my brothers a favour, you should answer a question that I am asking you. This Narayana is handsome and is revered by all the kings. But he shows you a great deal of honour, serves you and indulges you. In his presence and before all these kings, and for doing what is agreeable to my brothers, you should speak to me about the nature of this affection."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Hearing his respectful words, Bhishma, Bhagirathi's son, was filled with affection and spoke these words.

'Bhishma continued, "I will tell you about an extremely enchanting account. O king! It is about the power this Vishnu showed in ancient times and I heard about it. Also hear from me about the power of the one who has a bull as his sign. Hear about the doubts of Rudrani and the couple.[383] Krishna, with dharma in his soul, observed a vow for twelve years. When he had initiated himself, Narada and Parvata went there to see him. Krishna Dvaipayana, Dhoumya, supreme among those who meditate, Devala, Kashyapa and Hastikashyapa were also there. There were other virtuous and self-restrained rishis who had initiated themselves. Those stores of austerities were like the gods and they were followed by all their disciples. Devaki's son was delighted. Taking them to be the equals of the gods, he worshipped them with all the honours that were due to guests, befitting their lineages. Happily, the maharshis sat down on seats that were green and gold, new and made out of the feathers of peacocks. While the stores of austerities resided there, there were pleasant conversations on topics connected

with dharma, and about rajarshis and gods. At that time, because of the vow that was being observed, Narayana's energy arose from the kindling. In the form of a fire, it emerged from the mouth of Krishna, the performer of wonderful deeds. That fire started to burn the mountain, with its trees, creepers and bushes, with the large numbers of birds, animals, predatory beasts and reptiles. Many kinds of animals lost their senses and began to utter cries of lamentation. The summit of the mountain was mangled and assumed a blazing appearance. The mighty and raging fire burnt down everything else. It then approached Vishnu and touched his feet, like a disciple. Seeing that the forest had been burnt down, Vishnu, the afflicter of enemies, cast his benign eye towards it and brought it back to its natural state. The mountain again became full of blossoming trees and creepers. There were large numbers of birds and predatory beasts and reptiles. On witnessing this extraordinary sight, the large numbers of sages began to think. They were astounded and their body hair stood up. They showed signs of fear. Narayana, supreme among eloquent ones, saw that the rishis were astounded. In gentle and sweet words, he asked them a question. 'What has happened to these bulls among rishis? You are always devoid of attachment. You have renounced and are without a sense of ownership. Why are you overcome by this wonder? O unblemished ones! I have a doubt about the precise nature of this. O rishis! O stores of austerities! You should speak to me and explain this.'

'"The rishis replied, 'You create the worlds and you withdraw them back again. You are winter. You are summer. You are the monsoon. You are the father and the mother of every object that exists on earth, mobile and immobile. You are the lord and you are the source of creation. O Madhusudana! This itself is wonderful and praiseworthy. O benign one! However, you should explain the fire that emerged. O afflicter of enemies! That is the reason we are suffering from fright. O Hari! You should speak to us about what we have heard and what we have seen.'

'"Vasudeva said, 'What emerged from my mouth is Vaishnava energy. It has black trails and it is the fire of destruction at the end of a yuga. The mountain was mangled by this. O rishis! Why are you afflicted? You have conquered anger. You have conquered your senses. You are the stores of austerities and are like the gods. Nevertheless, you are distressed and are seeking assurance. I am observing a vow. I am following the vow of an ascetic. That is the reason the fire arose from me. You should not be pained by this. I came to this auspicious mountain to observe the vow. A son who will be my equal in valour will be created through these austerities. That is the reason the soul in my body emerged in the form of this fire. It has gone to see the grandfather of all the worlds, the granter of boons. O best among sages! He told me that I would have a son. This son would use half of my energy and would be born as Vrishadhvaja.[384] It is he who assumed the form of a fire and appeared before my feet, restored to his nature, as if he was a peaceful disciple wishing to serve me. This is the mystery about the intelligent Padmanabha.[385] Out of affection, I have told you this. O ones rich in austerities! You should not be scared. Without any anxiety, you can go everywhere. You are far-sighted. You are ablaze in the vow of asceticism. You are full of jnana and vijnana. Tell me about something supremely wonderful that you have heard of, or seen, in heaven or on earth. I wish to taste the amrita that emerges as words from your lips. O ones who reside in hermitages! Anything that you speak about will be like that. O ones who are pure in vision! Everything wonderful and divine that I see in heaven or on earth is part of my own supreme nature, which no one can obstruct. There is nothing that manifests itself as wonderful unless that wonder originates in me. But everything that is

spoken by the faithful and the virtuous must be heard. They have remained on earth for a long time and are like the writing on the rocks. Now that you have assembled, that is the reason I wish to hear something from the mouths of the virtuous. You continuously speak about topics that illuminate the intelligence of men.'"

'Bhishma continued, "At this, all those numerous sages were comforted and approached Krishna. With eyes that were like lotus petals, they looked at Janardana. Some of them glorified him. Others worshipped him. Those eloquent ones used hymns from the Rig Veda to chant Madhusudana's praises. All the sages appointed Narada, who could see the words and who was eloquent with words, to speak on their behalf. They said, 'O lord! There was an extraordinary and unthinkable event on Mount Himalaya. This was experienced by a large number of sages who had gone on a visit to the tirthas.' He was urged by those large numbers of sages. As instructed, for everyone's welfare, he told Hrishikesha everything. The illustrious sage and rishi, devarshi Narada, spoke about the auspicious incident that had occurred in earlier times."'

## Chapter 1808(127)

'Bhishma said, "Narada, the illustrious rishi, Narada's well-wisher, spoke about the conversation between Shankara and Uma. '"Narada said, 'The lord of the gods, the one with dharma in his soul and the one with the sign of the bull was engaged in austerities on sacred Mount Himalaya, frequented by the siddhas and the charanas. The place was beautiful because of the numerous herbs and diverse flowers. It was inhabited by large numbers of apsaras and surrounded by hundreds of bands of *bhutas*. They had many forms and some were malformed. Some were divine and extraordinary to see. Others had faces like lions, tigers, elephants and all kinds of other species. There were those with faces like jackals and leopards. Others had faces like bears and bulls. There were those with faces like owls. There were others with faces like hawks and kites. Some had faces like many kinds of deer. All kinds of species assembled there. There were large numbers of kinnaras, gods, gandharvas, yakshas and bhutas. The place was full of divine flowers and was adorned with celestial garlands. There was divine sandalwood and the smell of celestial incense. The one with the mark of the bull was seated there. Celestial musical instruments were sounded—drums, kettledrums, conch shells and trumpets. With peacocks surrounding them, the large numbers of bhutas danced. The place was populated by celestial women and the divine apsaras also danced. It was a beautiful sight and was divine and wonderful to see. The lord of the bhutas practised austerities on that mountain. O Madhava! The mountain was unmatched. The supreme brahmanas studied there and there were the sounds of the brahman and vashatkara, combined with singing. It was as if a great festival was being observed, though the place also had a terrible appearance. O Janardana! On seeing this, the large numbers of sages were overcome by great delight. There were the immensely fortunate sages, successful ones who had held up their seed, the Maruts, the Vasus, the Sadhyas, the eternal Vishvadevas, the yakshas, the serpents, the pishachas, the guardians of the worlds, the fire god and all the different kinds of sentiments. All of them assembled, to reside there. There were the seasons, scattering flowers, and the great elements. There were the blazing herbs, illuminating the forest.

Filled with delight, the birds sang and danced. They sported on the slopes of that beautiful mountain and people found this very pleasant.

‘“‘The great-minded god was seated on the slope of that mountain, which was adorned with divine minerals. It seemed like a bed. His lower garment was the skin of a tiger and his upper garment was the skin of a lion. A snake was his sacred thread and he was adorned with red armlets. His beard and matted hair were tawny. His form was terrible, one that created terror among the enemies of the gods. However, Vrishabhadhvaja[386] granted freedom from fear to all creatures who were devotees. On seeing him, all the rishis bowed down their heads. Those forgiving ones were cleansed from all their sins and freed from all their taints. Bhutapati’s[387] place had an extremely terrible appearance. It was extremely difficult to approach and was populated by large serpents. O Madhusudana! But in a short instant, everything became wonderful. The one with the bull as his sign was seated there, assuming a terrible form. However, the daughter of the mountain[388] arrived there, surrounded by the wives of the bhutas. Her garments were like Hara’s and the vows that she followed were also similar to his. She held a sparkling golden pot that was filled with water from all the tirthas. All the sacred mountainous streams followed the auspicious one. Flowers were showered down and many kinds of fragrances began to blow. The one who resided on the slopes of the Himalayas approached Hara’s side. Smilingly and in sport, the auspicious and beautiful goddess suddenly covered Hara’s eyes with her hands. As soon as his eyes were covered, everything lost consciousness and was enveloped in darkness. Suddenly, oblations and vashatkara disappeared. Everyone was distressed and overwhelmed by terror and fright. As soon as Bhutapati’s eyes were covered, it was as if the sun had vanished. However, in a short instant, the darkness that pervaded the worlds was dispelled. A great and blazing flame emerged from his forehead, from the mouth of the third eye and it was like the sun. It blazed like the fire of destruction at the end of a yuga and it began to destroy the mountain.

‘“‘The daughter of the mountain saw the blazing fire emerge from the eye. On seeing this, the large-eyed one bowed her head down before Hara. The forest of shala and *sarala* trees was being burnt. So were the beautiful groves of sandalwood. The celestial herbs were ablaze. Large numbers of animals were terrified. They swiftly appeared before Hara and sought his protection. It was simultaneously terrible and beautiful. The flames were like the fickle touch of lightning and rose up and touched the sky. It was as if all twelve Adityas were together. It was like the fire at the time of the destruction of a yuga. It was as if Mount Himalaya was burnt down in an instant. The summit and its minerals were consumed. The herbs were burnt and destroyed. On seeing that the mountain had been destroyed, the daughter of the king of the mountains sought refuge with the illustrious one. She joined her hands in salutation and stood there. Sharva[389] saw Uma standing there, mild in her feminine nature. She did not desire that her father should face this disaster. Bhava glanced affectionately towards the mountain and everything became beautiful again, returned to the natural state. The birds were delighted and the trees in the forests blossomed.

‘“‘On seeing that the mountain had returned to its natural state, the goddess was happy. The unblemished one spoke to her husband, Maheshvara, the lord of all creatures. “O illustrious one! O lord of all creatures! O one who wields the trident! O one who is great in vows! A great doubt has been generated in me and you should explain this. Why did a third eye manifest itself on your forehead? Why was the mountain, with its large numbers of birds and forests, burnt down? After a

short instant, why did it regain its natural state? O Maheshvara! Having destroyed it, why did you cover it with trees again?" Maheshvara replied, "O goddess! O unblemished one! In your childishness, you covered my eyes. Since the light was destroyed, in a short instant, the world was destroyed.[390] O daughter of the mountain! When the sun was destroyed, the world was pervaded by darkness. I created the blazing third eye to protect the subjects. In a short while, that great energy destroyed this mountain. O goddess! To ensure your pleasure, in a short instant, I restored it to its natural state." Uma said, "O illustrious one! Those of your faces that are towards the east, the north and the south are handsome and beautiful to see, like the moon. Why is the face towards the south terrible? Why do you possess tawny, matted and erect hair? Why is your throat blue, like the plumage of a peacock? Why is the Pinaka[391] always there in your hand? Why are you always in the form of a matted brahmachari? I have a doubt about all of this. O Bhutapati! O unblemished one! Tell me. O Vrishadhvaja! I am your companion in the pursuit of dharma." The daughter of the mountain spoke to the illustrious wielder of the Pinaka in this way. The lord was pleased with her conduct and her intelligence. The god therefore said, "O extremely beautiful one! O one with the beautiful face! I will tell you the reason behind these forms."'''

## Chapter 1809(128)

'''Maheshvara said, "In ancient times, Brahma created a supreme woman named Tilottama. The beautiful one was created out of tiny particles from jewels.[392] In her beauty, she was unmatched on earth. That goddess approached me. O beautiful one! The one with the beautiful face wanted to ostensibly circumambulate me, but actually wanted to seduce me. O goddess! In whichever direction the one with the excellent teeth approached me, one of my handsome faces emerged. In a desire to see her, using the powers of yoga, I came to have four faces. Using the yoga in my own self, I came to exhibit those four faces. With the face that is towards the east, I rule everything, like a lord. O unblemished one! With the face that is towards the north, I sport with you. With the face that is towards the west, I am amiable and bring happiness to all creatures. But towards the south, I am fierce in form. I am terrible and destroy subjects. For the welfare of all the worlds, I have become a brahmachari with matted hair. The Pinaka is in my hand to accomplish the tasks of the gods. In ancient times, hankering after my prosperity, Indra hurled his vajra at me. That scorched my throat. That is the reason I have a blue throat."

''''Uma asked, "There are many other excellent and handsome mounts. O god! Why have you accepted a bull as your mount?"

''''Maheshvara replied, "In ancient times, Brahma created a cow named Surabhi that yielded milk. Once she was created, she had many offspring and all of them yielded milk that was like amrita. From the mouth of one of the calves, some froth fell on my body. At this, I scorched the cows and they came to assume many different complexions. I was then pacified by the preceptor of the worlds,[393] who knows about the meaning of good policy. He gave me a bull for my standard and also as my mount."

''''Uma asked, "There are many different kinds of abodes and they possess all the qualities of the universe. O illustrious one! Having discarded all those, why do you find pleasure in the cremation

ground? It is full of hair and bones and is terrible with broken doors and pots.[394] It is infested with vultures and jackals and flames from funeral pyres. It is impure because of the mire from flesh, fat and blood, with entrails strewn around. There are the howls of jackals."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "During the night, I roam around the entire earth in search of a sacred spot. However, there is nothing more sacred than a cremation ground. Among all kinds of abodes, that is the reason I find pleasure in a cremation ground. It has the shade of banyan trees and is decorated with garlands that have been thrown away. O one with the beautiful face! With the large numbers of bhutas, I am happy there. O goddess! Without those large numbers of bhutas, I am not interested in residing anywhere. It is my view that this residence is sacred and is like heaven. It is supreme and auspicious. It is applauded by those who desire something sacred."

'"'Uma said, "O illustrious one! O lord of all the creatures! O supreme among those who uphold all kinds of dharma! O one who holds the Pinaka in the hand! O granter of boons! I have a great doubt. O lord! These large numbers of sages have tormented themselves through all kinds of austerities. There are many kinds of people who roam around in the world, attired as ascetics. O destroyer of enemies! For the sake of this large number of rishis and also to do what is agreeable to me, you should dispel this doubt. What are said to be the signs of dharma? How should men act? You are capable of speaking about dharma. You know about dharma. O lord! Tell me."'

'"Narada continued, 'At this, the entire assemblage of sages honoured the goddess. Those eloquent ones, who were supreme among those who knew about meanings, praised her with hymns from the Rig Veda.

'"'Maheshvara replied, "Non-violence, truthfulness in speech, compassion towards all creatures, tranquility and donations according to capacity—this is said to be the supreme dharma for a householder. Not desiring the wives of others, protecting what has been left in trust, protecting women, not accepting what has not been given and the avoidance of liquor and meat—these are five aspects. Dharma has many branches and all of these yield happiness. Any embodied being must act in accordance with dharma and accumulate dharma."

'"'Uma asked, "O illustrious one! I wish to ask you about a doubt and you should explain it to me. For each of the four varnas, dharma has qualities associated with the respective varnas. What is the nature of dharma for a brahmana? What is it for a kshatriya? What are the signs of dharma for a vaishya? What are the signs for a shudra?"

'"'Maheshvara replied, "O illustrious one! You have asked me about a very pertinent doubt. O immensely fortunate one! On earth, the brahmanas are like gods on earth. There is no doubt that fasting always constitutes dharma for brahmanas. Dharma and artha result from this and they become immersed with the brahman.[395] O goddess! The rituals of dharma involve the law of following the vows. People are born twice through the sacrament of the sacred thread.[396] The supreme dharma for embodied beings is to worship the seniors and the gods and immerse oneself in studying. Dharma results from acting in this way."

'"'Uma said, "O illustrious one! I have a doubt in this connection and you should explain it to me. Skilfully recount to me the dharma of the four varnas."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "Listening to the mysteries of dharma, observing the vows of the Vedas, following the dharma of the vows, pleasing the preceptor by remaining near his feet, following the

dharma of seeking alms, always being immersed in dharma, always following the dharma of studying and following the stage of brahmacharya—these are for a brahmana. After having finished studying and having received the preceptor's permission, he must follow the proper rites and accept a wife who is his equal. For him, dharma is to follow the path of the virtuous and avoid food offered by a shudra. Dharma must always be followed and so must brahmacharya. Controlling the senses, oblations must always be offered into the fire. A householder must be restrained in diet and must subsist on leftovers. He must be pure and truthful in speech. Dharma is following the vow of serving guess. Dharma is tending to the three sacred fires. Following the indicated ordinances, animals must be bound for the purposes of performing sacrifices. Sacrifices and non-violence towards creatures constitute supreme dharma. It is dharma not to eat first and to only eat leftovers. It is said that there is dharma when one eats after the other family members have eaten. This is especially true of a learned brahmana who is a householder. The dharma of a householder is that the husband and the wife should be equal in their pursuit of dharma. For the gods who reside in the household, one must always offer flowers and sacrifices. The house must always be rubbed clean and fumigated with smoke. For the sustenance of the worlds, this is the dharma of the twice-born who are householders. This is always nurtured by virtuous brahmanas. O goddess! I will recount for you the dharma of kshatriyas. I will recite it for you. Listen to me with undivided attention. It has been said that the dharma of kshatriyas is to protect the subjects. For a king who follows this dharma, his enjoyment of the fruits has been indicated. If a king follows the dharma of protecting the subjects, because he has accumulated dharma through protecting the subjects, he conquers the worlds. In addition, the supreme dharma for a king is self-control and studying, the performance of agnihotra sacrifices and donations. He must wear the sacred thread and follow the rites of dharma associated with sacrifices. His dharma is to unwaveringly follow the tasks and support the servants. Dharma lies in applying the rod of chastisement appropriately. It is dharma to follow the rites and sacrifices indicated in the Vedas. Dharma is being devoted to truthfulness in speech and ensuring the resolution of disputes. If a king extends a helping hand to those who are distressed, he obtains greatness in the world hereafter. He must exhibit valour for the sake of cattle and brahmanas and lay down his life in battle. He conquers the world through horse sacrifices and obtains residence in heaven. The eternal dharma of a shudra is animal husbandry and agriculture. He must perform agnihotra sacrifices and donate gifts and study. He must engage in trade in virtuous ways. He must tend to guests and be tranquil and self-restrained. He must welcome brahmanas. Renouncing is the eternal dharma of vaishyas. A vaishya who is engaged in the path of trade must never sell sesamum, fragrances and juices and must follow the path of truth. According to capacity and as is proper, he must tend to all the guests, and thus pursue the three objectives.[397] The supreme dharma for a shudra is to always serve brahmanas. A shudra who is controlled, performs austerities, is devoted to the truth, conquers his senses and serves his guests obtains a store of greatness that is associated with austerities. An intelligent shudra will shun violence and be good in conduct. He will worship gods and brahmanas. He thus obtains the fruits associated with dharma. O beautiful one! I have told you everything about the four varnas, one by one. O beautiful one! What else do you wish to hear?"'"'

# Chapter 1810(129)

‘‘‘Uma said, “You have separately described for me the sacred dharma that the four varnas must observe for their benefit. O illustrious one! But tell me about the dharma that pervades everything.”

‘‘‘‘Maheshvara replied, “The creator and ordainer of the worlds desired qualities and created brahmanas for saving the worlds. Among all the mortals on earth, they are regarded as gods. I will tell you about their rites of dharma and the resultant fruits. The dharma of brahmanas is said to be the supreme dharma. For sustaining the worlds, Svayambhu created three kinds of dharma. Whenever the earth is recreated, these are created. Listen to them. The dharma cited in the Vedas is supreme, the ones in the sacred texts known as the smritis come next. After that, it is said to be virtuous conduct. These three types of dharma are eternal. A brahmana should know the three Vedas,[398] but he should not earn a living through studies. A person who performs the three rites, overcomes the three and is a friend to everyone is said to be a brahmana.[399] The lord of the worlds has decreed that brahmanas can perform six acts for making a living. Hear with single-minded attention. Studying, teaching, donating gifts, receiving gifts, performing sacrifices and officiating at the sacrifices of others—these six acts are in conformity with dharma for a brahmana. Continuous studying is dharma. Sacrifices represent eternal dharma. According to capacity and according to the ordinances, gifts are praised. This is supreme dharma and the virtuous are always devoted to this. In this way, pure householders can accumulate great stores of dharma. A person who performs the five sacrifices,[400] is pure in soul, is truthful in speech, is without malice, donates, treats brahmanas well, lives in clean houses, is without insolence and is always upright, is pleasant in speech, is devoted to welcoming guests, eats leftovers and lawfully offers *padya*, arghya, a seat, a bed, a lamp and refuge to a guest—is regarded as someone who follows dharma. One must wake in the morning and perform ablutions, then invite the guests to eat. One must treat them well, before allowing them to leave. This is eternal dharma. Day and night, to the best of one’s capacity, one must tend to guests and pursue the three objectives. The dharma of shudras is said to be service towards the other three varnas. It has been ordained that the dharma of a householder has the attributes of pravritti. This is auspicious and beneficial towards all beings and I will recount this. According to one’s capacity, one must donate. One must perform sacrifices in the same way. One must follow the acts for sustenance and one must desire one’s own prosperity. Wealth must be earned through dharma. The riches earned through dharma must be divided into three parts. In all tasks, a man must make efforts to follow supreme dharma. A person who desires his own prosperity must set aside one part for the pursuit of dharma. Another part is for the pursuit of kama. The third part is set aside for increasing the riches. Another kind of dharma is said to be the pursuit of moksha and this has the attributes of nivritti. O goddess! I will describe this kind of conduct to you. Listen to the truth. This dharma is compassion towards all beings. One should not reside in the same village for more than one night. For someone who craves for moksha, the act of freeing oneself from the bonds of hope is praised. There should be no attachment towards the water pot, water, clothes, seats, the triple staff, beds, fire, or the place one has sought refuge in. Such a

person's mind and consciousness is turned towards adhyatma. He is always attached to yoga and sankhya. He seeks shelter under a tree. He finds refuge in an empty house. He lies down along the banks of rivers. He loves the banks of rivers. A person who is freed from all kinds of attachment and all bonds of affection is a brahmana. A person who has the sentiments of merging his own self with his atman is a brahmana. He is as immobile as a pillar. He abstains from food. All his acts are driven towards moksha. He wanders around, attached only to such things. This is eternal dharma. He dwells alone. He is without attachment. He cannot be seen in the same village for more than one night. He is not tied to any place of residence. He is free. He does not sleep on the same bank of a river for more than one night. The learned say that this is the dharma of moksha. This is the virtuous path of the righteous, mentioned in the Vedas. A person who follows this path leaves no footprints behind him. There are four kinds of mendicants—*kutichara, kritodaka, hamsa* and *paramahamsa*.[401] Among these, the one that follows is superior to the preceding one. There is nothing superior, inferior or equal to the last.[402] There is nothing before it or after it. Such a person is tranquil, without happiness or unhappiness. He is without change, without old age and without death."

'"'Uma said, "You have spoken about householders, the dharma of moksha and the conduct of virtuous people. In the mortal world, these paths are beneficial and great. O one who knows about dharma! I wish to know about the supreme dharma followed by the rishis. I have always been attached to those who reside in hermitages. A fragrant smoke rises from the ghee offered as oblations and seems to spread throughout the hermitage. O Maheshvara! My mind is always delighted at seeing them. O god! O lord! I have a doubt about the dharma followed by sages. O one who knows about the truth about all kinds of dharma! O god of the gods! Tell me about this. O Mahadeva! Explain to me everything about what I have asked you."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "I will tell you about the supreme dharma followed by the sages. O beautiful one! Observing their own austerities, the sages progress towards success. O immensely fortunate one! O one who knows about dharma! Listen to the dharma observed by the rishis who always know about dharma. They are the Phenapas and their dharma is to subsist on foam.[403] In heaven, Brahma drank some sweet amrita and some sacred foam was released from what Brahma had drunk. The pure stores of austerities who subsist on this are known as the Phenapas. Now hear about the large numbers of Valakhilyas who tread along the path of dharma. The Valakhilya sages have obtained success through their austeries and reside in the solar disc. There are also those who know about dharma and follow the conduct of birds. They wish to observe *unchha*. They dress themselves in skins cast off by deer. They are attired in hides and rags. The Valakhilyas, stores of austerities, are beyond the opposite pairs of sentiments and progress along the virtuous path. They are each as long as a thumb and they reside in their own respective places, desiring to perform austerities. The fruits of their dharma are great. They are as revered as the gods. They ensure success in the tasks meant for the gods. They have burnt down all their sins through their austerities and illuminate the directions. There are others who are pure in their minds and are devoted to the dharma of compassion. These virtuous and auspicious ones are Chakracharas[404] and they roam around in Soma's world. The Samprakshalas, the Ashmakuttas and the Dantolukhalinas reside near the world of the ancestors and following the ordinances, resort to unchha.[405] There are others who drink soma, like the gods. Still others subsist on heat. Resorting to unchha, they are present there and naturally restrain their senses.

They offer oblations into the fire and worship the ancestors and the gods. They perform the five sacrifices and these sacrifices are said to constitute their dharma. O goddess! These are the Chakrachara brahmanas who roam around in the world of the gods. Other kinds of dharma are also practised by the rishis. Hear about those. All those who follow the dharma of rishis conquer their atmans and control their senses. After this, it is my view that desire and anger must be conquered. The sacrifices known as agnihotra and *dharmaratri* must be performed and so must sacrifices with oblations of soma. Dakshina must be given at the five sacrifices. Always observing the rites of sacrifices and devotion towards worshipping the ancestors and the gods constitute dharma. Through what has been obtained by practising unchha, one must tend to the guests. One must refrain from enjoying beauty and control the addiction towards milk. One must lie down on the bare ground. One must practise yoga. One must eat herbs and leaves. One must eat fruits, roots, wind, water and moss. These are the rituals practised by the rishis. Through these, they obtain the destinations meant for those who have renounced. When there is no smoke from a house, when the pestle has been laid down, when the fire has been extinguished, when residents have eaten, when the vessels have been put away, when mendicants have ceased to solicit alms and when there are no guests waiting—that is when a person must eat whatever food is left. A person who is devoted to this dharma of the truth and is forgiving follows the dharma of a sage. He is not arrogant. He is not proud. He is not distracted. He is not astounded. He treats friends and enemies equally. He is friendly towards everyone and knows about supreme dharma.”’”’

## Chapter 1811(130)

‘“‘ Uma said, “There are those who are controlled in their vows and restrained and reside in beautiful regions, mountainous springs, streams, groves and forests in hills and colourful spots with fruits and roots. O Shankara! I wish to hear about their sacred rites. O lord of the gods! They reside in vanaprastha and depend only on their own selves for maintenance.”

‘“‘Maheshvara replied, “Listen attentively to the dharma practised by those who are in vanaprastha. O goddess! Listen attentively to this and turn your intelligence towards supreme dharma. For those virtuous and controlled ones who decide to reside in the forest, there are things that ensure success. Listen to the tasks that must be observed by those who are in vanaprastha. They must perform ablutions thrice a day and must perform the rites for worshipping the ancestors and the gods. They must observe agnihotra and follow the ordinances in offering oblations at sacrifices. They must pick up wild rice and subsist on fruits and roots. They must extract the oil required from castor and inguda nuts. Having obtained success through the practice of yoga, they must give up desire and anger. They must resort to *virashayya* and reside in *virasthanas*.[406] A virtuous person must be immersed in yoga and during the summer, he must expose himself to the five fires.[407] He must follow the yoga practised by a frog and other similar techniques.[408] He must always be in *virasana.* He must sleep on the bare ground. A person whose mind has turned towards dharma must act so as to expose himself to the cold and to the heat. He must subsist on water or air. He must eat moss. He must be controlled and must be an Ashmakutta or a Samprakshala. He must be attired in rags and hides. He will wear garments made

out of deerskin. Following dharma and following the ordinances, he must spend as much of time as left to him. He must always reside in forests. He will roam around in forests. He will always be found in a forest. He will approach his preceptor in the forest. He will reside there and obtain his subsistence from the forest. His dharma is represented by the rites of offering oblations. He will perform the five sacrifices. He will follow the injunctions mentioned in the Vedas and perform sacrifices on *nagapanchami*.[409] He will be devoted to performing sacrifices on the eighth lunar day and chaturmasya. He will always perform sacrifices on the day of the full moon and all the other sacrifices. He will be freed from all attachment towards the wife. He will be free from all kinds of confusion. He will be freed from all kinds of sin. Such a sage will roam around in the forest. His supreme possessions are the sacrificial ladle and vessel and he is always devoted to the three fires. Such a righteous person is established on the virtuous path and goes to the supreme destination. Such sages resort to the dharma of rishis and obtain success. They go to Brahma's extremely auspicious world and to Soma's eternal world. O goddess! I have thus told you briefly about the auspicious dharma followed by those who resort to vanaprastha. However, there are many detailed aspects."

'"'Uma said, "O illustrious one! O god! O lord of the gods! O one to whom all creatures bow down! There is a dharma that is spoken about as leading to success and large numbers of sages follow it. Tell me about this. Success has been spoken about and those who reside in the forest have obtained success through that mode. However, there are also others that follow their own independent modes and remain attached to their wives. What is said to be their dharma?"

'"'Maheshvara replied, "O goddess! All those ascetics who follow independent modes sport with their wives. Their shaved heads and ochre robes are because of where they reside during the night.[410] The rishis perform ablutions thrice a day and render great oblations. Meditation, resorting to the virtuous path and following the instructions have been specified for them. I have earlier spoken about the dharma that should be followed by forest dwellers. If that dharma is followed, one obtains the fruits of austerities. If one is following the dharma of having a wife, then one should control one's senses and be satisfied with one's own wife alone. Following the ordinances, one should have intercourse with her when she is in season. The dharma that has been laid down by the rishis is the dharma that should be followed. Those who know about dharma do not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by desire. A person must properly grant the dakshina of freedom from fear to all creatures. If he also frees himself from violence and anger, he is united with dharma. If a person is compassionate towards all creatures, upright in his vows towards all creatures and if he looks upon all creatures as his own self, he is united with dharma. Bathing oneself in all the Vedas and uprightness towards all creatures are equal in merit. Perhaps uprightness is superior. Uprightness is said to be dharma. Deceit is said to be adharma. A man who is upright is said to be united with dharma. A person who is upright in this world always resides near the immortals. Therefore, a person who desires to follow dharma must always be upright. A person who is forgiving and self-restrained, if he has conquered anger and he does not cause injury, is immersed in dharma. A man who is always devoted to dharma is said to be united with dharma. A person must not be distracted and must have dharma in his soul. To the best of his capacity, he must resort to the path of the virtuous. His intelligence and character are then supreme and he is thought to be immersed in the brahman."

‘“‘Uma asked, “O god! There are ascetics who are stores of austerities. They are radiant in their states. What kind of conduct ensures this for them? O illustrious one! There are also kings and princes, poor or extremely rich. Through what deeds can they obtain great fruits? O god! There are also forest dwellers who obtain eternal regions where they are smeared with divine sandalwood paste. What are their deeds? O god! I have a doubt about the auspicious pursuit of austerities. O three-eyed one! O destroyer of Tripura! Tell me everything about this.”

‘“‘Maheshvara replied, “There are self-controlled people who follow the vow of fasting. They are non-violent and truthful in speech. They are successful and without disease. After death, they find delight with the gandharvas. In the right place and following the ordinances, they lie down in manduka yoga. They have dharma in their souls and initiate themselves. They find delight with the nagas. There are those who reside with deer and survive on the basis of grass that falls off from the mouth of deer. They initiate themselves in this. They go to Amaravati[411] and find delight there. There are those who follow the vow of surviving on moss and dried leaves. They always follow the yoga of exposing themselves to the cold. They go to the supreme destination. There are those who survive on wind and air and eat fruits and roots. They obtain the prosperity of the yakshas and find delight with large numbers of apsaras. There are those who follow the rites instructed in the ordinances. They follow the yoga of exposing themselves to the fire and the heat. If they do this for twelve years, they become kings. If a sage controls his food and carefully observes the rituals for twelve years, near a desert, he becomes a king.[412] If a person initiates himself into the vow of lying down on the bare ground, with the open sky in every direction, and follows this for twelve years, he obtains happiness. O beautiful one! A person who lies down on the ground obtains many kinds of fruits, extremely expensive beds and houses and the radiance of the moon. If a person obtains subsistence through his own self and is controlled and restrained in food, giving up his life through fasting, he obtains heaven. If a person initiates himself in the vow of obtaining subsistence through his own self, follows this for twelve years and gives up his body in the great ocean, he obtains Varuna’s world. If a person initiates himself in the vow of obtaining subsistence through his own self, follows this for twelve years and pierces his feet with stones, he obtains delight with the guhyakas. There may be a person who cleanses his soul with his own atman. He is beyond the opposite pairs of sentiments and is without possessions. Immersed in his mind alone, he initiates himself into this vow, which he observes for twelve years. He obtains the world of heaven and finds delight with the gods. If a person initiates himself into the vow of obtaining subsistence through his own self, follows this for twelve years and then gives up his body as an oblation into the fire, he obtains greatness in Agni’s world. O goddess! There may be a brahmana who is controlled and has initiated himself into the proper ordinances. He immerses himself in his atman. He is beyond the opposite pairs of sentiments and is without possessions. Immersed in his mind alone, he initiates himself into this vow, which he follows for twelve years. He then ties a pile of kindling to his shoulder, but is otherwise unattired. He always devotes himself to the path meant for brave ones and is in virasana. He is always in virasthana and gives up his life in the way followed by brave people. He goes to Shakra’s eternal world, where he is honoured with all the objects of desire. It is full of divine flowers and he is smeared with celestial sandalwood paste. With dharma in his soul, he resides happily in heaven, with large numbers of gods. If a brave person is always engaged in the yoga followed by brave people, if he is spirited and gives

everything up and if he initiates himself into the path followed by brave people and is always controlled and pure, then he obtains the eternal worlds that are meant for brave people. With great ease, he roams around on celestial vehicles that can go wherever they want. He is handsome and without disease. He goes to Shakra's world and finds happiness there."'"'

## Chapter 1812(131)

'"'"Uma said, "O illustrious one! O one who plucked out Bhaga's eyes! O one who struck down Pushan's teeth![413] O one who destroyed Daksha's sacrifice! O three-eyed one! I have a great doubt. In ancient times, the illustrious Svayambhu created the four varnas. Through what perverse deeds does a vaishya become a shudra? How does a kshatriya become a vaishya and a brahmana become a kshatriya? O god! By following what kind of dharma is one capable of preventing this degradation of varnas? As a consequence of what deeds is a brahmana reborn as a shudra? O lord! Through what deeds does a kshatriya become a shudra? O god! O lord of the bhutas! O unblemished one! I have a doubt. Tell me. How can those who naturally belong to the other three varnas become brahmanas?"

'"'"Maheshvara replied, "O goddess! O auspicious one! The status of a brahmana is extremely difficult to obtain. One is a brahmana as a result of creation. It is my view that kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras are also created.[414] However, because of wicked deeds, a brahmana can be dislodged from his state. Therefore, being the best of the varnas, a brahmana must try to protect that status. If a kshatriya or vaishya follows a brahmana's dharma and lives in the manner indicated for brahmanas, he too can obtain the status of a brahmana. If a person abandons the status of a brahmana and follows the dharma of a kshatriya, he is dislodged from the status of a brahmana and is reborn as a kshatriya. The status of a brahmana is extremely difficult to obtain. However, because of greed and confusion, a brahmana may always resort to the work of vaishyas and this shows extreme folly. A brahmana can thus become a vaishya and a vaishya can become a shudra. A brahmana can be dislodged from his own dharma and can become a shudra. Such a brahmana is dislodged from his varna and becomes an outcast. He goes to hell and is dislodged from Brahma's world. He is reborn as a shudra. An immensely fortunate kshatriya or vaishya can also deviate from his own dharma and tasks and follow the tasks meant for a shudra. Dislodged from this own position, he causes a confusion of varnas. In this way, brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas can become shudras. If a person is pure and is engaged in his own dharma, if he pursues jnana and vijnana without being sullied, if he knows about dharma and follows dharma, he obtains the fruits of dharma. O goddess! After this, I will recount what was recited by Brahma. 'The virtuous faithfully pursue dharma, kama and adhyatma.' Food cooked by those who are fierce, food cooked together for large groups and food at the funeral ceremony for a miscarriage at birth are condemened. Tainted food and food served by a shudra must never be eaten. O goddess! Food cooked by a shudra is condemned. It is my view that the proof for this lies in the words that emanated from the mouth of the grandfather, the great-souled god of the gods. If one dies with some of the food from a shudra undigested in one's stomach, even if one has offered oblations into the fire, one is reborn as a shudra. Because of the undigested food from a shudra, one is

dislodged from the status of a brahmana. Such a brahmana becomes a shudra. There is nothing to think about this. If a brahmana dies with undigested food in his stomach, whatever be the varna of the person from whom he received that food, he is reborn as that varna. The status of a brahmana is extremely difficult to obtain and is sacred. If one disrespects it and eats food that should not be eaten, one is dislodged from the status of a brahmana. A brahmana who drinks liquor, is guilty of killing a brahmana, is mean in behaviour, is a thief, breaks his vows, is impure, is negligent about studying, is wicked, greedy, deceitful and fraudulent, is without vows, is the husband of a vrishala lady, eats directly from the cooking vessel, sells soma and serves those who are inferior is dislodged from a brahmana birth. A brahmana who violates his preceptor's bed, hates his preceptor and maligns his preceptor is dislodged from a brahmana birth, even if he happens to know about the brahman. However, by performing the acts associated with virtuous conduct, a shudra can obtain the status of a brahmana and a vaishya that of a kshatriya. Following the law and the ordinances, a shudra must make efforts to serve and attend to the needs of the superior varnas. Without any distraction, a shudra must always remain established in this path of the virtuous. He must honour gods and brahmanas and observe the vow of showing hospitality towards all guests. He must be controlled and restrained in diet and approach his wife when it is her season. He must search out accomplished people and separate them from the unaccomplished. He must eat leftover food. A shudra who desires to become a vaishya must not eat pointless meat. He must be truthful in speech. He must be without a sense of pride. He must be beyond the opposite pairs of sentiments and must be knowledgable about tranquility. He must always perform sacrifices. He must be pure and supremely devoted to studying. He must be self-controlled. He must honour brahmanas and seek the welfare of all the varnas. He must be in the state of a householder and must only eat in the morning and in the evening.[415] He must conquer the inclination to eat and subsist on leftovers. He must be without desire and without ego. Following the rites, he must offer libations at agnihotra sacrifices. He should eat the food that is left after all the guests have eaten. A vaishya must thus tend to the three fires. Such a vaishya is pure and obtains greatness by being born in a family of kshatriyas. If such a vaishya is born as a kshatriya, observes all the sacraments from the time of birth, performs virtuous deeds and observes all the vows, thereafter, he becomes a brahmana. Born as a kshatriya, he must cleanse himself, perform sacrifices and donate copious amounts of dakshina. If he desires heaven, he must always study and tend to the three fires. He must always stretch out a hand towards the afflicted and following dharma, protect the subjects. He must be truthful and always seek happiness in following the truth. Following dharma, he must use the rod of chastisement. He must not hesitate to use the rod of chastisement in ensuring adherence to dharma. In all acts, he must be bound by not extracting more than one-sixth.[416] A person who knows about artha must be comfortable in matters of sexual intercourse. A person who has dharma in his soul must always have intercourse with his wife when it is her season. He must be controlled in observing fasts. He must be pure and supremely devoted to studying. He must always sleep on a bed of kusha grass. There must always be a fire in his house. With a cheerful mind, he must attend to all the guests and pursue the three objectives. He must always tell shudras who desire food that it is available. No desire should be discernible that is driven by selfish motives. He must seek to tend to ancestors, gods and guests. In his own house, he must live like a mendicant. Following the ordinances, he must render oblations into the fire thrice a day. He must not turn his back in a battle

and must lay down his life for cows and brahmanas. Or, he must give up his life by entering the three fires that have sanctified with mantras. Such a person becomes a brahmana. A kshatriya who has cleansed himself, is full of jnana and vijnana, is accomplished in the Vedas and has dharma in his soul can become a brahmana through his own deeds. These are the fruits of deeds obtained by those who are born in inferior varnas. A shudra who cleanses himself in this way can become a brahmana. A brahmana who is indiscriminate about which varna he accepts food from can become an outcast. He may have to give up the sacredness associated with the status of being a brahmana and become a shudra. A shudra who is pure in his deeds, pure in his soul and has conquered his senses can obtain the status of becoming a brahmana. Brahma himself said this. It is my view that a shudra who is naturally pure in his deeds should be known as one who is purer than a brahmana. Birth, sacraments, learning and humility are not sufficient reasons for a person to be a brahmana. Conduct is the only reason. All the brahmanas in the world obtain that status because of conduct. O one with the beautiful hips! A person who possesses that good conduct obtains the status of a brahmana. O fortunate one! It is my view that the nature of being a brahmana is equal everywhere[417]—wherever the sparkling brahman, devoid of qualities, exists, that person is a brahmana. O goddess! Depending on the place, the fruits of birth are only for purposes of classification. Brahma, the granter of boons, created subjects and spoke of it in this way. The status of being a brahmana is like a great field that roams around on earth, using its feet. The seeds that are sown in that field lead to crops in the hereafter. A person who is always restrained in diet and is always on the path of the virtuous is one who walks along Brahma's path and obtains greatness. When he is in a house in the form of a householder, he must always show the traits of studying the samhitas. He must always devote himself to studies and earn a living through donations and studies. A brahmana who acts in this way and is always based on the path of virtue, offering oblations into the fire, is regarded as one who is immersed in the brahman. Once one has obtained the status of a brahmana, one must make all one's efforts to preserve it through deeds and not accepting gifts from inferior varnas. O one with the sweet smiles! I have thus told you everything about how a shudra can become a brahmana. I have also told you about how a brahmana can be dislodged from dharma and can become a shudra."'"'

## Chapter 1813(132)

'"'Uma asked, "O illustrious one! O lord of all the bhutas! O one who is worshipped by the gods and the asuras! O god! O lord! I have a doubt about dharma and adharma for men. Tell me about this. Men are always bound down in three ways—deeds, thoughts and words. They are also freed from nooses through these means. O god! Through what kinds of good deeds, what kinds of qualities in conduct and what kinds of speech do men go to heaven?"

'"'Maheshvara replied, "O goddess! You know the truth about the purport of dharma. You are always devoted to truth and self-control. However, engaged in the welfare of all beings, you have asked a question that enhances intelligence. Listen. A virtuous person is devoted to the dharma of truth. He discards every kind of desire. He dispels all his doubts and is not bound down by dharma or adharma. He is omniscient and looks on everything equally. He knows the truth about destruction and

falling down. Such men are beyond attachment and are freed from all bondage. Such a man does not cause any injury in deeds, thoughts and words. They are never attached and are not bound down by any kinds of deeds. They are not addicted to taking the lives of others. They are virtuous in conduct and are full of compassion. They are impartial towards what is hated and what is agreeable. They are controlled and are freed from all the bondage of deeds. They are compassionate towards all creatures. They grant assurance to all beings. Such men discard all injurious tendencies in their conduct and go to heaven. They never have a sense of ownership about what belongs to others. They avoid the wives of other people. Men who enjoy the riches obtained through dharma go to heaven. Men who always act towards other people's wives as if they are mothers, sisters or daughters, go to heaven. They always refrain from theft and are satisfied with their own riches. Men who are content with what fortune has given them go to heaven. They are devoted to their own wives and have intercourse when it is the season. Men who do not hanker after sexual intercourse like vulgar people go to heaven. Their conduct is such that they always withdraw their glances from looking towards the wives of other people. They control their senses. Such men exhibit supreme good conduct and go to heaven. These men always tread along the path that has been created by the gods. Learned men always tread along this path, even if they are not attired in ochre. They follow the dharma of donating. They observe good conduct and purity. They are compassionate. For the sake of earning a living, such men always follow dharma. Virtuous men who wish to reside in heaven should follow this and nothing else."

'"'Uma said, "There are words that bind down and there are also those that lead to liberation. O god! O lord of creatures! O unblemished one! Tell me about those."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "For one's own self, for the sake of someone else, for sport or for laughter, if a man never utters a falsehood, he goes to heaven. For the sake of subsistence, for the sake of dharma, or for the sake of satisfying desire, if a man never utters a falsehood, he goes to heaven. Men who speak gentle, harmless and sweet words that are devoid of sin, and those who utter words of welcome go to heaven. Virtuous men do not utter bitter, harsh and cruel words, and are not addicted to slander. They go to heaven. There are men who avoid calumny and do not use words that cause dissension. They only utter words that ensure friendship. They go to heaven. There are men who never seek to hate others and do not seek to search out their weaknesses. They are self-controlled and equal in treatment towards all creatures. They go to heaven. There are those who avoid deceitful and vain talk and words that are against others. They always indulge in amiable speech. They go to heaven. Because of anger or fear, they do not utter words that shatter the hearts of others. Even when angered, they speak comforting words. Such men go to heaven. O goddess! In speech, a man must always follow this kind of dharma. This is auspicious and has the quality of truth. A learned person must always avoid falsehood."

'"'Uma said, "A man is always bound down by his thoughts and deeds. O immensely fortunate one! O god of the gods! O wielder of Pinaka! Tell me about those."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "A man must always exhibit dharma in his thoughts. O fortunate one! He will then go to heaven. I will tell you about it. Listen. If there are wicked thoughts, the acts these lead to are more evil. They bind men down. O one with the beautiful face! Listen. Even if a man seeks something that belongs to someone else, abandoned in a deserted forest, and does not entertain

thoughts about appropriating it, he goes to heaven. If a man never desires an object that belongs to someone else, in a village, house or a deserted place, he goes to heaven. In that fashion, if a man never desires to have intercourse with someone else's wife, not even in his mind, he goes to heaven. A man whose thoughts are such that he always regards a friend and an enemy as equal, and treats both as friends when he meets them, goes to heaven. A man who is learned, compassionate, pure, devoted to the truth and satisfied with what belongs to him, goes to heaven. A man whose nature avoids enmity, one whose intelligence is always turned towards friendship and one who is compassionate towards all beings, goes to heaven. If a man is faithful, compassionate, virtuous, loves association with virtuous people and always knows the difference between dharma and adharma, he goes to heaven. O goddess! If a man knows the fruits and consequences of good and bad deeds, he goes to heaven. A man who follows the law, possesses the qualities, is always devoted to gods and brahmanas and reveres those who should be shown respect, goes to heaven. I have recounted to you the fruits of auspicious deeds about the path that leads to heaven. What do you wish to hear next?"

'"'Uma said, "O Maheshvara! I have a great doubt about mortal creatures. Therefore, you should explain this to me in a skilful way. O lord! Through what deeds does a man obtain a long life? O lord of the gods! Through what great austerities does one obtain a long life? On earth, because of what deeds does a man obtain a short life? O god! O unblemished one! You should tell me about these perverse deeds. Some obtain great fortune. Others obtain ill fortune. Some are born in ignoble families. Others are born in noble families. Some men are hideous and look like pieces of wood. Other men are handsome and beautiful to behold. Some are limited in intelligence, others are wise. Some are extremely wise and have insight about jnana and vijnana. Some face few obstructions, others confront great impediments. O god! Men are seen to be like this. You should instruct me about this."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "O goddess! I will tell you about the fruits of deeds. In the world of mortals, all men enjoy these fruits. There may be a fierce man who is engaged in taking the lives of others, with a staff raised in his hand. With staffs raised in their hands, large numbers of demons always attack him.[418] There may be a man who is cruel towards all beings. He always causes anxiety to everyone. He is so wicked that he doesn't even spare insects and ants. O goddess! Such a man goes to hell. If a hideous person has dharma in his soul, he is reborn handsome. A person with injurious tendencies in his soul goes to hell. A person who doesn't cause injury goes to heaven. In hell, a man confronts terrible hardships. Having passed through hell, some are reborn as humans, but have short lifespans. O goddess! A man who is addicted to violence is bound down by his wicked deeds. A person who causes injury to all creatures is reborn as one with a short lifespan. A person who does not kill beings, has cast aside his staff and does not use his staff against anyone, one who does not strike or kill even when he is struck and one who is affectionate towards all creatures, treating others like his own self, is reborn as a pure person. O goddess! These kinds of men are the best and obtain divinity. They obtain happiness and all the objects of pleasure. They will obtain bliss. When such a person is reborn in the world of men, he obtains happiness and a long life. Through good conduct and good deeds, this is the path to obtain a long life. Brahma has spoken about liberation through lack of injury towards creatures."'"'

‘‘‘‘Uma asked, “Through what kind of conduct, behaviour, deeds and donations does a man obtain heaven?”

‘‘‘‘Maheshvara replied, “O goddess! If a man is generous, honours brahmanas, is compassionate towards the distressed and the blind, donates food, grain, drink and garments, constructs dwelling houses, assemblies, wells, lakes and ponds and cheerfully gives all those who desire, and not just one single person, seats, beds, vehicles, riches, jewels, houses, all kinds of grain, cattle, fields and women —when such a person dies, he obtains the world of the gods. He dwells there for a long period of time, enjoying all the objects of pleasure. With apsaras for company, he sports and obtains bliss in Nandana and other pleasure gardens. Thereafter, when he is dislodged from heaven, he is reborn in the world of men. O goddess! However, he is born in a family that possesses all the objects of pleasure, with riches and grain. With all the qualities of desire, he finds delight there. Such a man is prosperous. He has large stores of treasure and many objects of pleasure. O goddess! In this way, a person who is generous in his conduct towards all creatures obtains all the objects of pleasure and is handsome in every way. Brahma himself spoke about this in ancient times. O goddess! There are others who are niggardly in giving to brahmanas. They are limited in intelligence and do not give, even when they have possessions. Even when they see distressed, blind and afflicted people and mendicants and guests who are seeking, they turn them away. They are addicted to their own tongues and greed. They do not give riches, garments, objects of pleasure, food, gold, cattle, not even food that is not good. They follow evil conduct. They are greedy and non-believers. They are devoid of generosity. O goddess! Such foolish men always go to hell. After some time has passed, they are reborn as men. But these ones, limited in intelligence, are born in families that lack riches. They are overwhelmed by hunger and thirst. They do not enjoy the objects of pleasure. They lose hope about obtaining all the objects of pleasure. They subsist by following inferior methods of living. Such men are born in families that have few objects of pleasure. They suffer from ill fortune. O goddess! It is through their own deeds that these men are born poor. There are others who are insolent and proud, always addicted to wicked deeds. Lacking sense, they do not offer seats, even to those who deserve them. Limited in intelligence, they do not yield right of way to those who should be granted right of way. Limited in intelligence, they do not offer padya to those who should be offered padya. They do not follow the ordinances and worship and honour those who should be revered by giving them arghya. Limited in intelligence, they do not offer arghya and water for ablutions to those who deserve them. When a preceptor arrives, they do not treat the preceptor with the affection that he deserves. Their conduct is driven by insolence and they are full of greed. They disrespect those who should be revered. They seek to subjugate their seniors. O goddess! Such kinds of men always go to hell. After many years have passed, these men overcome hell and are born again, but in inferior families. Those insensible people, those who disrespect their preceptors and seniors, are born in inferior lineages, like those of svapakas and *pulkasas*.[419] A person who is not insolent and proud, one who worships gods and brahmanas, one who bows down before everyone and uses sweets words, one who does what is agreeable to all varnas and is always engaged in the welfare of all beings, is honoured in the worlds. Such a person does not hate. He is pleasant and gentle in his words. His speech is always

agreeable. He does not cause injury to any being and has words of welcome for everyone. He always observes the virtuous ordinances and worships those who deserve to be shown respect. He yields the right of way to those who should be given right of way. He worships preceptors as a preceptor should be worshipped. He receives guests who arrive and honours the others who come. O goddess! Such men obtain the destination of heaven. When such a person is reborn as a man, this occurs in a superior family. There are all the objects of pleasure there and the family possesses all the jewels. He follows supreme dharma and donates to those who should be given. He is revered by all creatures. All the worlds bow down before him. Such a man always obtains these fruits because of his own deeds. He obtains a superior lineage and associates with those who are superior. I have spoken about the dharma that the creator himself spoke about. There may be a person who is fierce in conduct. All creatures are terrified of him. He strikes them with his hands and feet and sticks, or binds them up in ropes. O beautiful one! He stupefies creatures with bricks and other methods and ties them up. He is deceitful in his intelligence, causing violence and agitation. He always attacks creatures and makes them anxious. A person who shows this kind of conduct goes to hell. After some time has passed, he is born as a man. However, he is reborn in an inferior family and has to face many kinds of impediments and hardships. This wicked man hated creatures and these are the fruits of his own deeds. O goddess! Know that this man's relatives and friends also have similar natures. There may be another person who is seen to be compassionate towards all creatures. He looks on everyone with a friendly eye, and treats them the way a father treats his son. He is in control of his senses and is without any enmity. He does not agitate creatures or cause any violence to them. He controls his hands and feet and offers assurance to all beings. He does not use ropes, rods, sticks and weapons to agitate creatures. He is gentle in his deeds and is full of compassion. A person with good conduct of this nature obtains heaven. He obtains delight in that divine residence, dwelling like a god. After those deeds have been exhausted, he is reborn in the mortal world as a human. However, when he is born, he faces no hardships or impediments and obtains happiness. Without any effort, he obtains happiness. Such a man is always without any anxiety. O goddess! These are the paths of the virtuous, where there are no obstructions."

'"'Uma said, "Some men are seen to be accomplished in commentaries and debating. They are full of jnana and vijnana. They are wise and learned about meanings. O god! There are others who find wisdom difficult to obtain. They are devoid of jnana and vijnana. Through what specific deeds does a man become wise? O Virupaksha! How does a man become limited in wisdom? O supreme among those who know about all kinds of dharma! Dispel my doubt about this. O god! Some are born blind. Others are afflicted by disease. Some men are seen to be eunuchs. Tell me the reason for this."

'"'Maheshvara replied, "There are brahmanas who are learned about the Vedas. They are successful and know about dharma. They incessantly ask about what is good and what is bad. They avoid inauspicious deeds and practise the auspicious ones. They always obtain heaven and happiness in this world. When they are reborn as men, they become intelligent. They are learned and wise and obtain what is beneficial. If a foolish person looks at another person's wife with a wicked eye, because of that evil sentiment, he is reborn as a blind person. With wicked intent, if a man looks at naked women, because of that evil deed, he is reborn as a person who is afflicted with disease. If a foolish man is evil in conduct and engages in an act of sexual intercourse with someone from another

varna, because of that lack of wisdom, he is reborn as an eunuch. A man who binds animals, violates his preceptor's bed and indulges in indiscriminate sexual intercourse, is reborn as one who is impotent."

'''Uma asked, "What are virtuous deeds? What leads to hell? O supreme among gods! How can a man obtain what is beneficial?"

'''Maheshvara replied, "A person who wishes to stay on the virtuous path must always ask brahmanas. A person who searches for dharma and desires the qualities obtains heaven. O goddess! Thereafter, when he is reborn as a human, he is intelligent and wise and retains his memory. O goddess! This is the revered dharma of the virtuous and it leads to prosperity. For the welfare of men, I have told you about this."

'''Uma said, "There are men who are limited in knowledge. They hate dharma. They do not desire to approach brahmanas who are learned in the Vedas. There are other men who follow vows and are full of devotion and self-control. There are others who deviate from vows and rituals and are like rakshasas. Some perform sacrifices. Others do not offer oblations. What kind of deeds lead to these outcomes? Tell me."

'''Maheshvara replied, "For the worlds, the ordinances of dharma have been laid down earlier in the sacred texts. However, even those who are firm in vows are subsequently seen to become ordinary in conduct. Because they are overcome by delusion, those who speak about dharma practise adharma. Those who deviate from their vows and ordinances are said to become Brahma-rakshasas.[420] After some time has passed, they regain their enterprise and are reborn as humans. However, they do not offer oblations. They do not utter vashatkara and are the worst among men. O goddess! I have thus dispelled all your doubts. I have told you about what is good and bad for men and about the ocean of dharma."'''

## Chapter 1815(134)

'''Maheshvara said, "O one who knows about the supreme! O one who knows about dharma! O one who resides in hermitages! O virtuous one! O one with the excellent brows! O one with beautiful tips of the hair! O daughter of the Himalaya mountain! O accomplished one! O one who possesses tranquility and self-control! O one who has no sense of ownership! O one who follows dharma! O beautiful one! I am asking you. I wish to ask you about something. Tell me. Savitri is Brahma's virtuous wife, Shachi is Koushika's[421] virtuous wife, Dhumorni is the wife of Martanda's son,[422] Riddhi is Vaishravana's[423] wife, Gouri is Varuna's wife, Suvarchala is Surya's wife, Rohini is the virtuous wife of the moon, Svaha is the wife of Vibhavasu[424] and Aditi is the wife of Kashyapa. All of them regard their husbands as gods. O goddess! You have always spoken to all of them and have asked them. O one who knows about dharma! O one who speaks about dharma! That is the reason I am asking you. I wish to hear about the dharma of women, which you also follow vis-à-vis me. You observe dharma with me. Your conduct is similar to mine. Your vows are similar to mine. Your attributes and energy are similar to mine. You have performed terrible austerities. Whatever you speak to me will become a yardstick. This will be specific to women and will always be the objective

of women. O Gouri! O one with the beautiful hips! This will always be observed on earth and be established in all the worlds. Your body is half of my body. It has emerged from half of my body. You are the one who performs the tasks of the gods. You are the one who caused the worlds to have offspring. O beautiful one! You know everything about the eternal dharma of women. Therefore, in detail, tell me about the specific dharma of women."

'"'Uma replied, "O illustrious one! O lord of all beings! O creator of the past, the present and the future! O god! It is because of your powers that these words are manifesting themselves before me. O lord of the gods! These rivers, with the waters of all the tirthas, have approached near you, so that you can touch their waters. After consulting them, I will progressively tell you everything.[425] Purusha is said to be someone who possesses the powers, but has no sense of ego.[426] O lord of creatures! Women always tend to follow other women. These rivers will therefore be honoured by me. This sacred river, Sarasvati, is supreme among all rivers. This is the foremost among all rivers and heads towards the ocean. There are Vipasha, Vitasta, Chandrabhaga, Iravati, Shatadru, Devika, Sindhu, Koushiki, Gomati and the river of the gods, which has all the tirthas and is the supreme rivers which has come down to earth from heaven, the goddess Ganga." This is what the wife of the god among the gods, supreme among the upholders of dharma, said. She first smiled and then addressed all those rivers. Devoted to dharma, the goddess and queen asked them about the dharma of women. All of them, with Ganga, supreme among rivers, as the foremost, were accomplished about the dharma of women. Uma said, "The illustrious one has asked a question about the dharma of women. I wish to speak to Shankara after I have consulted you. I do not see any knowledge on earth that is possessed by one single individual. Whether you are in heaven, or whether you head towards the ocean, I am therefore showing you respect."'"

'Bhishma continued, "Those best among rivers were auspicious and extremely sacred and were thus asked. They appointed Ganga, the river of the gods, who worshipped her.[427] She[428] was prosperous with a great deal of intelligence. She was sweet in her smiles and knew about the dharma of women. She spoke to the goddess who was the auspicious and sacred daughter of the king of the mountains, the one who destroys all sins. She[429] was intelligent and full of humility. She was accomplished in all kinds of knowledge. Possessing great intelligence, Ganga smiled and spoke these words. 'O goddess! O one who is devoted to dharma! We are blessed that you have shown us your favours. O unblemished one! You are revered by the entire universe, but you have shown honour to a river. If a powerful person asks another person, there is no doubt that the questioner should be respected. There is no doubt that a person who is evil-souled will not go to a learned person. A person who knows about jnana and vijnana and is accomplished in commentaries and arguments, but who does not ask others before replying, is not worthy of respect, even if he speaks extremely learned words in an assembly. If he is driven by a sense of ego, he ends up uttering words that are weak in import. You are foremost in heaven in your divine knowledge. The divine and the sacred are always present in you. O goddess! In instructions about the dharma of women, you are the one who should be worshipped by us.' The goddess was thus praised by Ganga because of her many qualities. The extremely beautiful one among the gods[430] then began to speak everything about the dharma of women. 'In accordance with the ordinances, the dharma of women manifests itself to me. I will thus speak about what is praiseworthy. In a marriage, the relatives speak about the dharma that women

should follow. In the presence of a fire, she agrees to follow the dharma of her husband. She must be pleasant in nature and sweet in speech. She must be good in conduct and must be pleasant in her appearance. With an attentive mind and a pleasant face, she must follow the dharma of her husband. This is the supreme dharma for a woman who wishes to have a share in dharma. A virtuous wife always regards her husband as a divinity. In her conduct, she attends to him and follows his words, as if a god has spoken it. She does not exhibit any sentiments of disregarding this and is excellent in her vows. She derives as much happiness from looking at her husband as from looking at her son's face. She is virtuous and controlled in her conduct. Such a wife follows dharma. It has been heard that the dharma of a couple is to follow the sacred dharma together. A wife whose intelligence is devoted to her husband and who bears a pleasant visage is one who follows that dharma. She does not speak harsh words, or does not glance at him with cruelty in her eyes. A woman who exhibits an extremely pleasant face towards her husband is one who is devoted to her husband. Such a beautiful woman does not look at the moon or the sun, or at a tree that has an appellation of being male. If she looks at none other than her husband, she is one who follows dharma. A woman who attends to her husband like a son, even if he is poor, diseased, distressed, or weak from travels, is one who obtains a share in dharma. If a woman is accomplished and self-controlled, if she has sons, if she is devoted to her husband and if she loves her husband, then that woman has a share in dharma. If a woman always serves and tends, without any distraction, if she is extremely happy and humble, then she obtains a share in the dharma. If a woman does not desire any objects of pleasure, prosperity or happiness other than her husband, then she has a share in that dharma. She always awakes at the right time and attends to the seniors. She keeps the house clean and rubs it down with cow dung. She always tends to the fire and makes offerings of flowers. With her husband, she satisfies gods, guests and servants. Following the law and the ordinances, she subsists on leftover food. A woman who always satisfies and nourishes people is united with dharma. Possessing the qualities, she satisfies the father-in-law and the mother-in-law, attentive at their feet. She is always devoted to her mother and her father and possesses a store of austerities. A woman who nourishes brahmanas, the weak, those without protectors, the distressed, the blind and the destitute with food is one who takes part in the vows of her husband. With a light spirit, she always practises vows that are extremely difficult to observe. Her mind is on her husband. She is engaged in the welfare of her husband. She is one who has a share in the vows of her husband. A woman who regards her husband as supreme, practises auspicious austerities, which convey her to eternal heaven. She is sacred and follows her husband's vows. For women, the husband is the god. The husband is the friend. The husband is the destination. There is no objective equal to the husband. There is no divinity equal to the husband. There is no heaven that can match a woman as much as a husband's favours. O Maheshvara! If you are pleased with me, that is beneficial heaven for me. Even if a poor or diseased husband asks the wife to undertake a task that is adharma or leads to a loss in life, even if that task is a vice or leads to a curse imposed by brahmanas, regarding this as the dharma to be followed in a time of catastrophe, that task must be undertaken, without any reflection. In accordance with your words, I have thus recounted the dharma of women. A beautiful woman who conducts herself in this way obtains a share in dharma.' Thus addressed, the lord of the gods worshipped the daughter of the mountain. He then gave all the people permission to leave, including his supreme companions. The large numbers of bhutas and the rivers went away, to

wherever they had come from. The gandharvas and the apsaras also bowed their heads down before Bhava."'

## Chapter 1816(135)

Vaishampayana said, 'Having heard everything about dharma and about everything that purifies, Yudhishthira again spoke to Shantanu's son. "Who is the single divinity in the world? Who is the single one who is the refuge? Who should a man praise and worship to obtain what is beneficial? In your view, what is the supreme dharma among all kinds of dharma? What mantras should be chanted to free a creature from the bondage of this cycle of life?"

'Bhishma replied, "The lord of the universe is the infinite god of the gods. He is Purushottama. A man must always arise and chant his one thousand names. A man must always devotedly worship the one without decay. One must meditate on him and praise him. One must perform sacrifices for him. Vishnu is without beginning and without end. He is the great lord of all the worlds. He is the controller of the worlds and must always be praised. One will then transcend all misery. He is devoted to brahmanas. He knows about all kinds of dharma. He is the one who enhances deeds in the worlds. He is the protector of the worlds. He is the great being. All the creatures originated in him. It is my view that this is the supreme dharma among all kinds of dharma. A man must always devotedly praise Pundarikaksha. He is supreme in his great energy. He is supreme in his great austerities. He is the supreme and great brahman. He is the supreme refuge. He is purest among all objects that are pure. He is the most auspicious among all objects that are auspicious. He is the god among all the gods. He is the undecaying father of all creatures. When the beginning of a yuga commences, all creatures owe their origin to him. When there is destruction at the end of a yuga, everything merges into him. O lord of the earth! He is Jagannatha, foremost in the worlds. Listen to Vishnu's one thousand names. They dispel all sin and fear. The great-souled one possesses minor names and famous ones. The rishis chanted them. For the sake of prosperity, I will state them. (1) Vishva;[431] (2) Vishnu; (3) Vashatkara; (4) Bhuta-bhavya-bhavat-prabhu;[432] (5) Bhuta-krit;[433] (6) Bhuta-bhrit;[434] (7) Bhava;[435] (8) Bhutatman;[436] (9) Bhuta-bhavana;[437] (10) Putatman;[438] (11) Paramatman; (12) Muktanam-parama-gati;[439] (13) Avyaya;[440] (14) Purusha;[441] (15) Sakshi;[442] (16) Kshetrajna; (17) Akshara;[443] (18) Yoga; (19) Yoga-vidam-neta;[444] (20) Pradhana-purusheshvara;[445] (21) Narasimha-vapu;[446] (22) Shrimat;[447] (23) Keshava;[448] (24) Purushottama;[449] (25) Sarva;[450] (26) Sharva;[451] (27) Shiva;[452] (28) Sthanu;[453] (29) Bhutadi;[454] (30) Nidhi-avyaya;[455] (31) Sambhava;[456] (32) Bhavana;[457] (33) Bharta;[458] (34) Prabhava;[459] (35) Prabhurishvara;[460] (36) Svayambhu; (37) Shambhuraditya;[461] (38) Pushkaraksha;[462] (39) Mahasvana;[463] (40) Anadi-nidhana;[464] (41) Dhatri;[465] (42) Vidhatri;[466] (43) Dhaturuttama;[467] (44) Aprameya;[468] (45) Hrishikesha;[469] (46) Padmanabha;[470] (47) Amara-prabhu;[471] (48) Vishvakarma;[472] (49) Manu; (50) Tvashtri;[473] (51) Sthavishtha;[474] (52) Sthavira;[475] (53) Dhruva;[476] (54) Agrahya;[477] (55) Shashvata;[478] (56) Krishna; (57) Lohitaksha;[479] (58) Pratardana;[480] (59) Prabhuta;[481] (60) Trikakubdham;[482] (61) Pavitra;[483] (62) Mangala;[484] (63) Parama;[485] (64) Ishana;[486] (65) Pranada;[487] (66) Prana;[488] (67) Jyeshtha;[489] (68) Shreshtha;[490] (69)

Prajapati; (70) Hiranyagarba;[491] (71) Bhugarbha;[492] (72) Madhava;[493] (73) Madusudana;[494] (74) Ishvara; (75) Vikrami;[495] (76) Dhanvi;[496] (77) Medhavi;[497] (78) Vikrama-krama;[498] (79) Anuttoma;[499] (80) Duradharsha;[500] (81) Kritajna;[501] (82) Kritiratmavan;[502] (83) Suresha;[503] (84) Sharana;[504] (85) Sharma;[505] (86) Vishvareta;[506] (87) Prajabhava;[507] (88) Aha;[508] (89) Samvatsara;[509] (90) Vyala;[510] (91) Pratyaya;[511] (92) Sarva-darshana;[512] (93) Aja;[513] (94) Sarveshvara;[514] (95) Siddha;[515] (96) Siddhi;[516] (97) Sarvadirachyuta;[517] (98) Vrishakapi;[518] (99) Ameyatman;[519] (100) Sarva-yoga-vinishrita;[520] (101) Vasu;[521] (102) Vasumana;[522] (103) Satya;[523] (104) Samatman;[524] (105) Sammita;[525] (106) Sama;[526] (107) Amogha;[527] (.) Pundarikaksha;[528] (108) Vrishakarma;[529] (109) Vrishakriti;[530] (110) Rudra; (111) Bahushira;[531] (112) Babhru;[532] (113) Vishva-yoni;[533] (114) Shuchi-shrava;[534] (115) Amrita; (.) Shashvata;[535] (.) Sthanu;[536] (116) Vararoha;[537] (117) Mahatapa;[538] (118) Sarvaga;[539] (119) Sarvavid;[540] (120) Bhanu;[541] (121) Vishvaksena;[542] (122) Janardana;[543] (123) Vedas; (124) Vedavid-avyanga;[544] (125) Vedanga; (126) Vedavid-kavi;[545] (127) Lokadhyaksha;[546] (128) Suradhyaksha;[547] (129) Dharmadhyaksha;[548] (130) Kritakrita;[549] (131) Chaturatman;[550] (132) Chaturvyuha;[551] (133) Chaturdamshtra;[552] (134) Chaturbhuja;[553] (135) Bhrajishnu;[554] (136) Bhojana;[555] (137) Bhokta;[556] (138) Sahishnu;[557] (139) Jagadadija;[558] (140) Anagha;[559] (141) Vijaya;[560] (142) Jeta;[561] (.) Vishva-yoni;[562] (143) Punarvasu;[563] (144) Upendra;[564] (145) Vamana;[565] (146) Pramshu;[566] (.) Amogha;[567] (147) Shuchirurjita;[568] (148) Atindra;[569] (149) Samgraha;[570] (150) Sarga;[571] (151) Dhritatman;[572] (152) Niyama;[573] (153) Yama;[574] (154) Vedya;[575] (155) Vaidya;[576] (154) Sadayogi;[577] (155) Viraha;[578] (.) Madhava;[579] (156) Madhu;[580] (157) Atindriya;[581] (158) Mahamaya;[582] (159) Mahotsaha;[583] (160) Mahabala;[584] (161) Mahabuddhi;[585] (162) Mahavirya;[586] (163) Mahashakti;[587] (164) Mahadyuti;[588] (165) Anirdeshya-vapu;[589] (.) Shrimat;[590] (.) Ameyatman;[591] (166) Mahadri-dhrik;[592] (167) Maheshvasa;[593] (168) Mahibharta;[594] (169) Shrinivasa;[595] (170) Satamgati;[596] (171) Aniruddha;[597] (172) Surananda;[598] (173) Govinda;[599] (174) Govidampati;[600] (175) Marichirdmana;[601] (176) Hamsa;[602] (177) Suparna;[603] (178) Bhujagottama;[604] (179) Hiranyanabha;[605] (180) Sutapa;[606] (.) Padmanabha;[607] (.) Prajapati;[608] (181) Amrityu;[609] (183) Sarvadrikimsaha;[610] (184) Samdhata;[611] (185) Samdhimat;[612] (186) Asthira;[613] (.) Aja;[614] (187) Durmarshana;[615] (188) Shasta;[616] (189) Vishrutatman;[617] (190) Surariha;[618] (191) Gururgurutama;[619] (192) Dhama;[620] (.) Satya;[621] (193) Satya-parakrama;[622] (194) Nimisha;[623] (195) Animisha;[624] (196) Sragvi;[625] (197) Vachaspati;[626] (198) Rudaradhi;[627] (199) Agrani;[628] (200) Gramani;[629] (.) Shrimat;[630] (201) Nyaya;[631] (202) Neta;[632] (203) Samirana;[633] (204) Sahasra-murdha;[634] (205) Vishvatman;[635] (206) Sahasraksha;[636] (207) Sahasra-pada;[637] (208) Avartana;[638] (209) Nivritatman;[639] (210) Samvrita;[640] (211) Sampramardana;[641] (.) Aha;[642] (212) Samvartaka;[643] (213) Vahni;[644] (214) Anila;[645] (215) Dharanidhara;[646] (216) Suprasada;[647] (217) Prasannatman;[648] (218) Vishvadhrik;[649] (219) Vishva-bhuk;[650] (220) Vibhu;[651] (220) Satkarta;[652] (221) Satkrita;[653] (222) Jahnu;[654] (223) Narayana;[655] (224) Nara;[656] (225) Amaskhyeya;[657] (226) Aprameyatman;[658] (227) Vishishta;[659] (228) Shishtakrit;[660] (229) Shuchi;[661] (230) Siddhartha;[662] (231) Siddha-samkalpa;[663] (232) Siddhida;[664] (233) Siddhi-sadhana;[665] (234) Vrishahi;[666] (235) Vrishabha;[667] (236) Vishnu;[668] (237) Vrishaparva;[669] (238) Vrishodara;[670] (239) Vardhana;[671] (240) Vardhamana;[672] (241) Vivikta;[673] (242) Shruti-sagara;[674] (243) Subhuja;[675] (244) Durdhara;[676] (245) Vagmi;[677] (246) Mahendra;[678] (247) Vasuda;[679] (.) Vasu;[680] (248) Naikarupa;[681] (249) Brihadrupa;[682]

(250) Shipivishta;[683] (251) Prakashana;[684] (252) Ojas;[685] (253) Tejas;[686] (254) Dyutidhara;[687] (255) Prakashatman;[688] (256) Pratapana;[689] (257) Riddha;[690] (258) Spashtakshara;[691] (259) Mantra; (260) Chandramshu;[692] (261) Bhaskaradyuti;[693] (262) Amritamshu;[694] (263) Bhava;[695] (264) Bhanu;[696] (265) Shashabindu;[697] (266) Sureshvara;[698] (267) Oushadha;[699] (268) Jagata;[700] (269) Setu;[701] (270) Satya-dharma-parakrama;[702] (271) Bhuta-bhavya-bhavannatha;[703] (272) Pavana;[704] (273) Paavana;[705] (.) Anila;[706] (274) Kamaha;[707] (275) Kamakrit;[708] (276) Kanta;[709] (277) Kamaprada;[710] (278) Prabhu;[711] (279) Yugadikrit;[712] (280) Yugavarta;[713] (281) Naikamaya;[714] (282) Mahashana;[715] (283) Adrishya;[716] (284) Vyakta-rupa;[717] (285) Sahasrajit;[718] (286) Anantajit;[719] (287) Ishta;[720] (.) Vishishta;[721] (288) Shishteshta;[722] (289) Shikhandi;[723] (290) Nahusha;[724] (291) Vrisha;[725] (292) Krodhaha;[726] (293) Krodhakrit;[727] (294) Karta;[728] (295) Vishva-bahu;[729] (296) Mahidhara;[730] (297) Achyuta;[731] (298) Prathita;[732] (.) Prana;[733] (.) Pranada;[734] (299) Vasavanuja;[735] (300) Apamnidhi;[736] (301) Adhishthanam;[737] (302) Apramatta;[738] (303) Pratishthita;[739] (304) Skanda; (305) Skanda-dhara;[740] (306) Dhurya;[741] (307) Varada;[742] (308) Vayu-vahana;[743] (309) Vasudeva; (310) Brihad-bhanu;[744] (311) Adideva;[745] (312) Purandara; (313) Ashoka;[746] (314) Tarana;[747] (315) Tara;[748] (316) Shura;[749] (317) Shouri;[750] (318) Janeshvara;[751] (319) Anukula;[752] (320) Shatavarta;[753] (321) Padmi;[754] (322) Padmanibhekshana;[755] (.) Padmanabha;[756] (323) Aravindaksha;[757] (324) Padmagarbha;[758] (325) Sharira-bhrit;[759] (326) Mahardhiriddha;[760] (327) Vriddhatman;[761] (328) Mahaksha;[762] (329) Garuda-dhvaja;[763] (330) Atula;[764] (331) Sharabha; (332) Bhima;[765] (333) Samayajna;[766] (334) Havi;[767] (335) Hari;[768] (336) Sarva-lakshana-lakshanya;[769] (337) Lakshmivat;[770] (338) Samitimjaya;[771] (339) Vikshara;[772] (341) Rohita;[773] (342) Marga;[774] (343) Hetu;[775] (344) Damodara;[776] (345) Saha;[777] (.) Mahidhara;[778] (346) Mahabhaga;[779] (347) Vegavat;[780] (348) Amitashana;[781] (349) Udbhava;[782] (350) Kshobhana;[783] (351) Deva; (352) Shrigarbha;[784] (353) Parameshvara;[785] (354) Karana;[786] (355) Kaarana;[787] (.) Karta;[788] (356) Vikarta;[789] (357) Gahana;[790] (358) Guha;[791] (359) Vyavasaya;[792] (360) Vyavasthana;[793] (361) Samsthana;[794] (362) Sthanada;[795] (.) Dhruva;[796] (363) Pararidhi;[797] (364) Parama;[798] (365) Spashtastushta;[799] (366) Pushta;[800] (367) Shubhekshana;[801] (368) Rama;[802] (369) Virama;[803] (370) Virata;[804] (.) Marga;[805] (371) Neya;[806] (372) Naya;[807] (373) Anaya;[808] (374) Vira;[809] (375) Shaktimatam-shreshtha;[810] (376) Dharma; (377) Dharma-viduttoma;[811] (378) Vaikuntha; (.) Purusha;[812] (.) Prana;[813] (.) Pranada;[814] (379) Pranava;[815] (380) Prithu;[816] (381) Hiranya-garbha;[817] (382) Shatrughna;[818] (383) Vyapta;[819] (384) Vayu;[820] (385) Adhokshaja;[821] (386) Ritu;[822] (387) Sudarshana;[823] (388) Kala;[824] (389) Parameshthi;[825] (390) Parigraha;[826] (391) Ugra;[827] (392) Samvatsara;[828] (393) Daksha;[829] (394) Vishrama;[830] (395) Vishva-dakshina;[831] (396) Vistara;[832] (397) Sthavara;[833] (.) Sthanu;[834] (398) Pramana;[835] (399) Vijamavyayam;[836] (400) Arrha;[837] (401) Anartha;[838] (402) Maha-kosha;[839] (403) Maha-bhoga;[840] (404) Maha-dhana;[841] (405) Anirvinna;[842] (406) Sthavishtha;[843] (407) Murdhamaryupa;[844] (408) Maha-makha;[845] (409) Nakshatra-nemi;[846] (410) Nakshatri;[847] (411) Kshama;[848] (412) Kshaama;[849] (413)Samihana;[850] (414) Yajna;[851] (415) Ijya;[852] (416) Mahejya;[853] (417) Kratu;[854] (418) Satra;[855] (419) Satam-gati;[856] (420) Sarva-darshi;[857] (421) Vimuktatman;[858] (422) Sarvajna;[859] (423) Jnanam-uttamam;[860] (424) Suvrata;[861] (425) Sumukha;[862] (426) Sukshma;[863] (427) Sughosha;[864] (428) Sukhada;[865] (429) Suhrid;[866] (430) Manohara;[867] (431) Jita-krodha;[868] (432) Vira-bahu;[869] (433) Vidarana;[870] (434) Svapana;[871] (435) Svavasha;[872] (436) Vyapi;[873] (437) Naikatman;[874] (438)

Naikakarma-krit;[875] (439) Vatsara;[876] (440) Vatsala;[877] (441) Vatsi;[878] (442) Ratna-garbha;[879] (443) Dhaneshvara;[880] (444) Dharmagub;[881] (445) Dharma-krit;[882] (446) Dharmi;[883] (447) Sadastksharam;[884] (448) Aksharam;[885] (449) Avijnata;[886] (450) Sahasramshu;[887] (.) Vidhatri;[888] (451) Kritalakshmana;[889] (452) Gabhasti;[890] (453) Nemi;[891] (454) Sattvastha;[892] (455) Simha;[893] (456) Bhuta-maheshvara;[894] (.) Adideva;[895] (457) Mahadeva;[896] (458) Devesha;[897] (459) Deva-bhrit-guru;[898] (460) Uttara;[899] (461) Gopati;[900] (462) Gopta;[901] (464) Kapindra;[902] (465) Bhuri-dakshina;[903] (466) Somapa;[904] (467) Amritapa;[905] (468) Soma; (469) Purujit;[906] (.) Purushottama;[907] (470) Vinaya;[908] (471) Jaya;[909] (472) Satya-sandha;[910] (473) Dasharha; (474) Satvata-pati;[911] (475) Jiva;[912] (476) Vinayita;[913] (.) Sakshi;[914] (477) Mukunda;[915] (478) Amita-vikrama;[916] (479) Ambho-nidhi;[917] (480) Anantatman;[918] (481) Maho-dadhishaya;[919] (482) Antaka;[920] (.) Aja;[921] (483) Maharha;[922] (484) Svabhavya;[923] (485) Jitamitra;[924] (486) Pramodana;[925] (487) Ananda;[926] (488) Nandana;[927] (489) Nanda;[928] (490) Satya-dharma;[929] (491) Tri-vikrama;[930] (492) Maharshi; (493) Kapilacharya;[931] (.) Kritajna;[932] (494) Medini-pati;[933] (495) Tripada;[934] (496) Tridashadhyaksha;[935] (497) Mahashringa;[936] (498) Kritantakrit;[937] (499) Mahavaraha;[938] (.) Govinda;[939] (500) Sushena;[940] (501) Kanakangadi;[941] (502) Guhya;[942] (503) Gabhira;[943] (.) Gahana;[944] (504) Gupta-chakra-gadadhara;[945] (505) Vedha;[946] (506) Svanga;[947] (507) Ajita;[948] (.) Krishna;[949] (508) Dridha;[950] (509) Samkarshana; (.) Achyuta;[951] (510) Varuna; (511) Vaaruna;[952] (512) Vriksha;[953] (.) Pushkaraksha;[954] (513) Maha-mana;[955] (514) Bhagavat;[956] (515) Bhagaha;[957] (516) Nandi;[958] (517) Vanamali;[959] (518) Halayudha;[960] (519) Aditya; (520) Jyotiraditya;[961] (521) Sahishnu;[962] (522) Gati-sattama;[963] (523) Sudhanva;[964] (524) Khanda-parashu;[965] (525) Daruna;[966] (526) Dravina-prada;[967] (527) Divah-sprik[968] (528) Sarva-drik;[969] (529) Vyasa; (.) Vachaspati;[970] (530) Ayonija;[971] (531) Trisama;[972] (532) Samaga;[973] (533) Sama; (534) Nirvana;[974] (535) Bheshaja;[975] (536) Bhishaka;[976] (537) Sannyasa-kricchama;[977] (538) Shanta;[978] (539) Nishtha;[979] (540) Shanti;[980] (541) Parayanam;[981] (542) Shubhanga;[982] (543) Srashta;[983] (544) Kumuda;[984] (545) Kuvaleshaya;[985] (546) Gohita;[986] (.) Gopati;[987] (.) Gopta;[988] (547) Vrishabhaksha;[989] (548) Vrisha-priya;[990] (549) Anivarti;[991] (.) Nivritatman;[992] (550) Samshepta;[993] (551) Kshema-kricchiva;[994] (552) Shrivatsa-vaksha;[995] (553) Shrivasa;[996] (554) Shripati;[997] (555) Shrimatam-vara;[998] (556) Shrida;[999] (557) Shrisha;[1000] (.) Shrinivasa;[1001] (558) Shri-nidhi;[1002] (559) Shri-vibhavana;[1003] (560) Shridhara;[1004] (561) Shrikara;[1005] (562) Shreya;[1006] (.) Shrimat;[1007] (563) Loka-trayashraya;[1008] (564) Svaksha;[1009] (565) Khadga;[1010] (566) Shatananda;[1011] (.) Nandi;[1012] (567) Jyoti;[1013] (568) Ganeshvara;[1014] (569) Vijitatman;[1015] (570) Vidheyatman;[1016] (571) Satkirti;[1017] (572) Chinna-samshaya;[1018] (573) Udima;[1019] (574) Sarvata-chakshu;[1020] (575) Anisha;[1021] (.) Shashvata;[1022] (576) Sthira;[1023] (577) Bhushaya;[1024] (578) Bhushana;[1025] (579) Bhuti;[1026] (.) Vishoka;[1027] (580) Shoka-nashana;[1028] (581) Archishmat;[1029] (582) Archita;[1030] (583) Kumbha;[1031] (584) Vishuddhatman;[1032] (585) Vishodhana;[1033] (.) Aniruddha;[1034] (586) Apratiratha;[1035] (587) Pradyumna; (.) Amita-vikrama;[1036] (588) Kalanemiha;[1037] (.) Vira;[1038] (.) Shura;[1039] (.) Shouri;[1040] (.) Janeshvara;[1041] (589) Trilokatman;[1042] (590) Trilokesha;[1043] (.) Keshava;[1044] (591) Keshiha;[1045] (.) Hari;[1046] (592) Kamadeva;[1047] (593) Kamapala;[1048] (594) Kami;[1049] (.) Kanta;[1050] (595) Kritagama;[1051] (596) Anirdeshya-vapu;[1052] (.) Vishnu;[1053] (.) Vira;[1054] (597) Ananta;[1055] (598) Dhananjaya; (599) Brahmanya;[1056] (600) Brahma-krit;[1057] (601) Brahma; (602) Brahma-vivardhana;[1058] (603) Brahma-

vid;[1059] (604) Brahmana; (605) Brahmi;[1060] (606) Brahmajna;[1061] (607) Brahmana-priya;[1062] (608) Maha-krama;[1063] (609) Maha-karma;[1064] (610) Maha-teja;[1065] (611) Mahoraga;[1066] (612) Maha-kratu;[1067] (613) Maha-yajva;[1068] (614) Maha-yajna;[1069] (615) Maha-havi;[1070] (616) Stavya;[1071] (617) Stava-priya;[1072] (618) Stotra;[1073] (619) Stuti;[1074] (620) Stota;[1075] (621) Rana-priya;[1076] (622) Puma;[1077] (623) Purayita;[1078] (624) Punya;[1079] (625) Punya-kirti;[1080] (626) Anamaya;[1081] (627) Manojava;[1082] (628) Tirtha-kara;[1083] (629) Vasu-reta;[1084] (630) Vasu-prada;[1085] (.) Vasudeva;[1086] (.) Vasu;[1087] (631) Vasumana;[1088] (632) Havi;[1089] (633) Sadgati;[1090] (634) Satkriti;[1091] (635) Satta;[1092] (636) Sadbhuti;[1093] (637) Satparayana;[1094] (638) Shurasena; (639) Yadu-shreshtha;[1095] (640) Sannivasa;[1096] (641) Suyamuna;[1097] (642) Bhutavasa;[1098] (.) Vasudeva;[1099] (643) Sarvasu-nilaya;[1100] (644) Anala;[1101] (645) Darpaha;[1102] (646) Darpada;[1103] (647) Dripta;[1104] (648) Durdhara;[1105] (649) Aparajita;[1106] (650) Vishva-murti;[1107] (651) Maha-murti;[1108] (652) Dipta-murti;[1109] (653) Amuritmat;[1110] (654) Aneka-murti;[1111] (655) Avyakta;[1112] (656) Shata-murti;[1113] (657) Shatanana;[1114] (658) Eka;[1115] (659) Naika;[1116] (660) Sava;[1117] (661) Ka;[1118] (662) Kim;[1119] (663) Yat;[1120] (664) Padam-anuttamam;[1121] (665) Loka-bandhu;[1122] (666) Loka-natha;[1123] (.) Madhava;[1124] (667) Bhakta-vatsala;[1125] (668) Suvarna-varna;[1126] (669) Hemanga;[1127] (670) Chandana-angadi;[1128] (.) Viraha;[1129] (671) Vishama;[1130] (672) Shunya;[1131] (673) Dhrita-sharira;[1132] (674) Achala;[1133] (675) Chala;[1134] (676) Amani;[1135] (677) Manada;[1136] (678) Manya;[1137] (679) Loka-svami;[1138] (680) Triloka-dhrik;[1139] (681) Sumedha;[1140] (682) Medhaja;[1141] (683) Dhanya;[1142] (684) Satyamedha;[1143] (685) Dhara-dhara;[1144] (.) Tejas;[1145] (.) Vrisha;[1146] (686) Dyuti-dhara;[1147] (687) Sarva-shastra-bhritam-vara;[1148] (688) Pragraha;[1149] (689) Nigraha;[1150] (690) Avyagra;[1151] (691) Naika-shringa;[1152] (692) Gadagraja;[1153] (693) Chatur-murti;[1154] (694) Chatur-bhuja;[1155] (695) Chatur-vyuha;[1156] (696) Chatur-gati;[1157] (697) Chatur-atman;[1158] (698) Chatur-bhava;[1159] (699) Chatur-veda;[1160] (700) Videkapat;[1161] (701) Samavarta;[1162] (702) Nivrita-atman;[1163] (703) Durjaya;[1164] (704) Duratikrama;[1165] (705) Durlabha;[1166] (706) Durgama;[1167] (707) Durga;[1168] (708) Duravasa;[1169] (709) Durariha;[1170] (.) Shubhanga;[1171] (710) Lokasaranga;[1172] (711) Sutantu;[1173] (712)Tantu-vardhana;[1174] (713) Indra-karma;[1175] (.) Maha-karma;[1176] (714) Krita-karma;[1177] (.) Kritagama;[1178] (.) Udbhava;[1179] (715) Sundara;[1180] (716) Sunda;[1181] (717) Ratna-nabha;[1182] (718) Sulochana;[1183] (719) Arka;[1184] (720) Vajasana;[1185] (721) Shringi;[1186] (722) Jayanta;[1187] (723) Sarva-vijjayi;[1188] (724) Suvarna-bindu;[1189] (725) Akshobhya;[1190] (726) Sarva-vagishvareshvara;[1191] (727) Maha-hrada;[1192] (728) Maha-garta;[1193] (729) Maha-bhuta;[1194] (730) Maha-nidhi;[1195] (.) Kumuda;[1196] (731) Kundara;[1197] (732) Kunda;[1198] (733) Parjanya;[1199] (.) Pavana;[1200] (.) Anila;[1201] (734) Amritamsha;[1202] (735) Amrita-vapu;[1203] (.) Sarvajna;[1204] (736) Sarvato-mukha;[1205] (737) Sulabha;[1206] (.) Suvrata;[1207] (.) Siddha;[1208] (738) Shatru-jit;[1209] (739) Shatru-tapana;[1210] (740) Nyagrodha;[1211] (741) Udumbara;[1212] (742) Ashvattha;[1213] (743) Chanura-andhra-nishudana;[1214] (744) Sahasrarchi;[1215] (745) Sapta-jihva;[1216] (746) Saptaidha;[1217] (747) Sapta-vahana;[1218] (748) Amurti;[1219] (.) Anagha;[1220] (749) Achintya;[1221] (750) Bhaya-krit;[1222] (751) Bhaya-nashana;[1223] (752) Anu;[1224] (753) Brihat;[1225] (754) Krisha;[1226] (755) Sthula;[1227] (756) Guna-bhrit;[1228] (757) Nirguna;[1229] (758) Mahat;[1230] (759) Adhrita;[1231] (760) Svadhrita;[1232] (761) Svasya;[1233] (762) Pragvamsha-vamsha-vardhana;[1234] (763) Bhara-bhrit;[1235] (764) Kathita;[1236] (765) Yogi; (766) Yogisha;[1237] (767) Sarva-kamada;[1238] (768) Ashrama; (769) Shramana;[1239] (.) Kshama;[1240] (.)

Suparna;[1241] (.) Vayu-vahana;[1242] (770) Dhanurdhara;[1243] (771) Dhanurveda;[1244] (772) Danda;[1245] (773) Damayita;[1246] (774) Dama;[1247] (.) Aparajita;[1248] (775) Sarva-saha;[1249] (776) Niyanta;[1250] (.) Niyama;[1251] (.) Yama;[1252] (777) Sattvavat;[1253] (778) Sattvika;[1254] (.) Satya;[1255] (779) Satya-dharma-parayana;[1256] (780) Abhipraya;[1257] (781) Priyarha;[1258] (782) Arha;[1259] (783) Priya-krit;[1260] (784) Priti-vardhana;[1261] (785) Vihayas-gati;[1262] (.) Jyoti;[1263] (786) Suruchi;[1264] (787) Huta-bhuj;[1265] (.) Vibhu;[1266] (788) Ravi;[1267] (789) Virochana;[1268] (790) Surya; (791) Savita; (792) Ravi-lochana;[1269] (.) Ananta;[1270] (.) Huta-bhuj;[1271] (.) Bhokta;[1272] (.) Sukhada;[1273] (793) Naikada;[1274] (794) Agraja;[1275] (795) Anirvinna;[1276] (796) Sadamarshi;[1277] (797) Lokadhishthanam-adbhutam;[1278] (798) Sanatana;[1279] (799) Sanatanatama;[1280] (800) Kapila; (801) Kapi;[1281] (.) Avyaya;[1282] (802) Svastida;[1283] (803) Svasti-krit;[1284] (804) Svasti;[1285] (805) Svasti-bhuk;[1286] (806) Svastidakshina;[1287] (807) Aroudra;[1288] (808) Kundali;[1289] (809) Chakri;[1290] (.) Vikrami;[1291] (810) Ajita-shasana;[1292] (811) Shabdatiga;[1293] (812) Shabda-saha;[1294] (813) Shishira;[1295] (814) Sharvari-kara;[1296] (815) Akrura;[1297] (816) Peshala;[1298] (.) Daksha;[1299] (817) Dakshina;[1300] (818) Kshaminam-vara;[1301] (819) Viddhatama;[1302] (820) Vita-bhaya;[1303] (821) Punya-shravana-kirtana;[1304] (822)Uttarana;[1305] (823) Dushkritiha;[1306] (.) Punya;[1307] (824) Duhsvapna-nashana;[1308] (.) Viraha;[1309] (825) Rakshana;[1310] (826) Santa;[1311] (827) Jivana;[1312] (828) Paryavasthita;[1313] (829) Ananta-rupa;[1314] (830) Ananta-shri;[1315] (831) Jita-manyu;[1316] (832) Bhayapaha;[1317] (833) Chaturasra;[1318] (834) Gabhiratman;[1319] (835) Vidisha;[1320] (836) Vyadisha;[1321] (837) Disha;[1322] (838) Anadi;[1323] (839) Bhur-bhuva;[1324] (840) Lakshmi; (841) Suvira;[1325] (842) Ruchirangada;[1326] (843) Janana;[1327] (844) Janaja;[1328] (845) Janmadi;[1329] (.) Bhima;[1330] (846) Bhima-parakrama;[1331] (847) Adhara;[1332] (848) Nilaya;[1333] (.) Dhatri;[1334] (849) Pushpa-hasa;[1335] (850) Prajagara;[1336] (851) Urdhvaga;[1337] (852) Satpathachara;[1338] (.) Pranada;[1339] (.) Pranava;[1340] (853) Pana;[1341] (.) Pramana;[1342] (854) Prana-nilaya;[1343] (855) Prana-krit;[1344] (856) Prana-jivana;[1345] (857) Tattva;[1346] (858) Tattva-vid;[1347] (859) Ekatman;[1348] (860) Janma-mrityu-jaratiga;[1349] (861) Bhur-bhuvah-svastarutsara;[1350] (.) Savita;[1351] (862) Prapitamaha;[1352] (.) Yajna;[1353] (863) Yajna-pati;[1354] (864) Yajva;[1355] (865) Yajnanga;[1356] (866) Yajna-vahana;[1357] (867) Yajna-bhrit;[1358] (868) Yajna-krit;[1359] (869) Yajni;[1360] (870) Yajna-bhuk;[1361] (871) Yajna-sadhana;[1362] (872) Yajnanta-krit;[1363] (873) Yajna-guhyam;[1364] (874) Annam;[1365] (875) Annada;[1366] (876) Atma-yoni;[1367] (877) Syayam-jata;[1368] (878) Vaikhanas; (879) Sama-gayana;[1369] (880) Devaki-nandana;[1370] (.) Srashta;[1371] (881) Kshitisha;[1372] (882) Papa-nashana;[1373] (883) Shankha-bhrit;[1374] (.) Chakri;[1375] (884) Sharnga-dhanva;[1376] (885) Gada-dhara;[1377] (885) Rathanga-pani;[1378] (.) Akshobhya;[1379] and (886) Sarva-praharanayudha.[1380] These are recited as the one thousand names of the great-souled Keshava. I have recounted them in detail and these divine names must be chanted. A man who always listens to these and recites them does not confront anything inauspicious, in this world and in the next. Such a brahmana obtains the Vedanta and a kshatriya becomes victorious. A vaishya becomes prosperous and a shudra obtains happiness. A person in search of dharma obtains dharma. A person in search of artha obtains artha. A person who desires objects of desire obtains objects of desire. A person who wants offspring obtains offspring. One must awake in the morning, purify one's mind and with devotion, recite Vasudeva's one thousand names. He will obtain great fame and become foremost among his relatives. He will obtain a prosperity that is not destroyed and will obtain supreme benefit. He will never face any fear and will obtain valour

and energy. He will not suffer from disease. He will be radiant and will be full of strength, beauty and other qualities. A person afflicted by disease will be freed from disease. A person who is bound down will be freed from bondage. A person who is scared will be freed from his fear and will be freed from all catastrophes. A man who always chants Purushottama's one thousand names with devotion will be able to quickly overcome all hardships. A mortal person must seek refuge with Vasudeva. He must be devoted to Vasudeva. He will then be freed from all sins and, pure in soul, will obtain the eternal brahman. A person who is devoted to Vasudeva never faces anything inauspicious. For such a person, there is no fear from birth, death, old age and disease. With faith and devotion, one must study these words of praise. One will then unite oneself with happiness, forgiveness of character, prosperity, fortitude, memory and deeds. There will be no anger, jealousy, greed or inauspicious tendencies. A person who is devoted to Purushottama accomplishes auspicious deeds. The firmament, the moon, the sun, the nakshatras, the directions, the earth and the great ocean—all these are pervaded with the great-souled Vasudeva's valour. The gods, the asuras, the gandharvas, the yakshas, the serpents, the rakshasas and everything mobile and immobile in the universe—all these are under Krishna's subjugation. The senses, mind, intelligence, spirit, energy, strength and fortitude—all of these are said to be part of Vasudeva's soul. He is the *kshetra* and the kshetrajna. In all the sacred texts, conduct is said to be the foremost. Conduct is based on dharma and he is said to be the lord of dharma. The rishis, the ancestors, the gods, the great elements, the minerals and everything mobile and immobile in the universe has originated from Narayana. The knowledge of yoga, the knowledge of sankhya, all the acts of artisanship, the Vedas, the sacred texts and vijnana—all these originated from Janardana. Vishnu is the single great being. He has manifested himself in many kinds of forms. He pervades the three worlds and is in the soul of all creatures. He is the undecaying enjoyer who enjoys the universe. This praise of the illustrious Vishnu was chanted by Vyasa. If a man desires to obtain benefit and happiness, he should read it. He is the lord of the universe. He is without origin. He is the undecaying god whose power pervades the universe. A person who worships Pundarikaksha does not have to face defeat."'

## Chapter 1817(136)

'Yudhishthira asked, "Who deserves to be worshipped? Who should one bow down to? What should one's conduct be, and towards whom? O grandfather! What kind of conduct, and towards whom, does not lead to suffering?"

'Bhishma replied, "The subjugation of brahmanas makes the gods suffer. O Yudhishthira! One does not suffer if one bows down before brahmanas. They must be worshipped. One should bow down before them. They should be treated like one's own sons. Those learned ones are the ones who hold up all the worlds. For all the worlds, the brahmanas are the great bridges of dharma. Their happiness is in renouncing riches and in restraining speech. They are firm in their vows and lay down ordinances that are agreeable to creatures. Those illustrious ones are the ones who formulate the sacred texts for the worlds. They possess the wealth of austerities. Words always constitute their great strength. Their power flows from dharma. They possess the subtle insight of dharma. They desire

dharma and are established in dharma. Their good deeds are the bridges of dharma. All the four kinds of subjects[1381] depend on them for life. They lead along the path that everyone should follow. They are the conveyors of the eternal sacrifices. They always bear the burdens of fathers, grandfathers and preceptors. Like well-trained cattle, they do not waver under the burden, even on uneven terrain. They are ahead of ancestors, gods and guests. They deserve the first share of havya and kavya. By eating the food, they save the worlds from great fear. They are lamps for all the worlds. They are eyes, even for those who possess sight. They are subtle in their insight and accomplished. They are the stores of all kinds of artisanship. They know about the progress of all creatures. They think about the progress of adhyatma. They know about the beginning, the middle and the end and are devoid of any sense of doubt. They know about what is superior and inferior. They go to the supreme destination. They are emancipated and have cleansed all sins. They are beyond the opposite pairs of sentiments and are without any possessions. They deserve to be honoured and are always respected. Those great-souled ones possess knowledge. They treat sandalwood paste and mud and filth equally. They are indifferent to what constitutes food and what does not constitute food. They regard fine cloth, coarse cloth, silk and hides equally. They can remain for many days, without eating anything. They can control their senses and dry up their bodies in studying. They can turn those who aren't divinities into gods and turn gods into those who aren't divinities. If they are enraged, they can create other worlds and guardians of the worlds. Because of the curse of those greatsouled ones, the waters of the ocean can no longer be drunk. The fire of their rage has still not been pacified in Dandaka. They represent gods among the gods. They are the reason among all reasons. They are the supreme proof among all proofs. Which learned person can disregard them? Among them, the aged and the young deserve all kinds of honours. They are superior because of their austerities and learning and they revere each other. An ignorant brahmana is also like a god and can be a great source of purification. A learned one is a greater god and is like a full ocean. Whether ignorant or learned, a brahmana is like a great divinity. This is like Agni being a great divinity, whether sanctified by mantras or not. An energetic fire is not tainted, even if it burns in the cremation ground. Clarified butter is also as beautiful, whether used in a sacrifice or not. A brahmana must always be revered, even if he is engaged in all kinds of acts that aren't beneficial. Know that he is like a supreme divinity."'

## Chapter 1818(137)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O lord of men! What is seen to be the prosperity that comes from worshipping brahmanas? O immensely wise one! What is your view? Why do you engage in these tasks of worshipping them?"

'Bhishma replied, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this connection, a history is recounted about a conversation between Pavana and Arjuna. There was the thousand-armed and handsome Kartavirya.[1382] The immensely strong one became the lord of this entire world and his capital was in Mahishmati. Haihaya had truth for his valour and he ruled the entire earth, with its stores of jewels, islands and the girdle of the ocean. He placed the dharma of kshatriyas at the forefront and was humble and learned. For some reason, he gave all his own riches to Dattatreya. Kritavirya's son

worshipped the sage. The brahmana was delighted and offered to grant him three boons. Happy at the prospect of receiving boons, the king said, ‘When I am in the midst of the soldiers, let me have one thousand arms. But in my house, it should not be that way.[1383] In the battle, let the soldiers see my one thousand arms. O one who is great in his vows! Let me conquer the entire earth through my valour. Having obtained it through dharma, let me attentively rule it. O supreme among brahmanas! I desire a fourth boon from you too. O unblemished one! You have shown me your favours and you should grant me this. If I ever resort to false conduct, let the virtuous instruct me.’ Thus addressed, the brahmana told the king that it would be that way. The one who was blazing in his energy granted him these boons. He[1384] ascended a chariot that was as resplendent as the fire and the sun. Deluded by his valour, he exclaimed, ‘There is no one who is my equal in valour, patience, fame, purity, bravery and energy.’ When he spoke these words, an invisible voice was heard from the sky. ‘O foolish one! You do not know that brahmanas are superior to kshatriyas. The kshatriya protects subjects because he is aided by brahmanas.’ Arjuna replied, ‘When I am pleased, I can create beings. When I am angry, I can convey them to their destruction. There is no brahmana who is superior to me in deeds, thoughts and words. You have said that the brahmana is superior. However, there is a second view that the kshatriya is superior. No special reason for superiority can be seen in what you have said. Brahmanas seek refuge with kshatriyas. Kshatriyas do not seek refuge with brahmanas. On earth, the brahmanas obtain their prosperity, their studying of the brahman and their food from kshatriyas. Dharma and the protection of subjects have kshatriyas as a refuge. Brahmanas obtain their sustenance through kshatriyas. How can brahmanas be superior? If those who always resort to alms are superior to all creatures, I will use my powers to bring all the brahmanas under my subjugation. What the maiden Gayatri[1385] has spoken from heaven is not the truth. The brahmanas are attired in skins. I will defeat them and bring all of them under my subjugation. There is no one in the three worlds, human or divine, who can dislodge me from my kingdom. Therefore, I am superior to brahmanas. If the brahmanas are foremost in the world, today, I will make kshatriyas superior to them. There is no one who can withstand my strength in battle.’ Hearing Arjuna’s words, the invisible voice was frightened. At this, Vayu spoke from the firmament. ‘Cast aside these wicked sentiments and bow down to brahmanas. If you commit this sin, your kingdom will be agitated. O lord of the earth! Otherwise, the brahmanas will pacify you. Those immensely strong ones will drive you away from your kingdom or destroy your enterprise.’ The king asked, ‘Who are you?’ The windgod replied, ‘I am Vayu. I am a messenger of the gods. I am telling you what is beneficial for you.’ Arjuna asked, ‘I can see that you have now exhibited your devotion and attachment towards brahmanas. Among all the creatures on earth, tell me about the brahmanas. Tell me. Is a supreme brahmana Vayu’s equal? Tell me. Is he equal to the water, the sun or the firmament?’”’

## Chapter 1819(138)

“‘Vayu said, ‘O foolish person! Listen to the qualities associated with the great-souled brahmanas. O king! The brahmanas are superior to the ones you have spoken about. The earth challenged King Anga and lost her essence in the ground. She was stupefied by the brahmana

Kashyapa and faced destruction. O king! The brahmanas are always indestructible, on earth and in heaven. In ancient times, the one from the Angiras lineage himself used his energy to drink up the waters. Having drunk up the waters, as if they were milk, the great ascetic wasn't satisfied. O king! He covered up the giant ocean with land everywhere. When the one from the Angiras lineage was angry with me, I had to flee from the earth for a long period of time and reside in the agnihotra sacrifice. When Purandara desired Ahalya, he was cursed by the illustrious Goutama. It was only for the sake of dharma that greater injury was not done to him. O king! The ocean became full of salty water. O lord! That salinity was due to the curse of brahmanas. Agni[1386] is golden in complexion, without any smoke and the flames rise upwards together. However, when cursed by an angry Angiras, all these qualities vanished. Behold the Maruts. They were crushed when they laughed at the great ocean. Those who wear gold[1387] have always been cursed by brahmanas. O lord of men! You are not their equal. Know brahmanas to be superior, even when these lords, the brahmanas, are still inside wombs. The great kingdom of Dandaka was destroyed by a brahmana. The great kshatriya named Talajangha was destroyed by Ourva alone. You have obtained your extensive kingdom, strength, dharma and learning because of the favours of Dattatreya and these are extremely difficult to obtain. O Arjuna! Why do you always offer oblations to Agni? He is nothing but a brahmana. He is the one who bears the oblations of all the worlds. Don't you know this? A brahmana is foremost. He is the protector of beings. He is the creator of the world of the living. Despite knowing this, why are you confused? Prajapati Brahma is unmanifest.[1388] He is powerful and without decay. He created everything in this universe, mobile and immobile. Some learned people say that Brahma was born from an egg. When that original egg cracked, mountains, directions, water, earth and heaven were created. No one saw that happen. How could he have been born from that darkness? The sacred texts also say that space was the egg from which the grandfather was generated. "Tell me. Since there was nothing then, where was he stationed then?" O king! "The lord was nothing but pervasive energy and is said to be Ahamkara. There was no egg. But Brahma, the creator of the worlds, was that energy."'"[1389]

'Bhishma continued, "Having been thus addressed, he was silent and Vayu spoke again."'

## Chapter 1820(139)

'"Vayu said, 'O king! In ancient times, there was a king named Anga. He wished to give away this entire earth as dakshina to brahmanas. The earth began to think. "I am Brahma's daughter and I properly sustain all the creatures. The king has obtained me as a boon. Why does he desire to give me away to brahmanas? I will abandon my essence in the ground and repair before Brahma's feet. Let this kingdom and its king face destruction." Kashyapa saw the earth wandering around. He controlled himself, freed himself from his body and entered the ground. Thus penetrated, it became full of grass and herbs in every way. O king! All fear was removed from the ground and it was pervaded by supreme dharma. O king! Kashyapa, great and attentive in his vows, remained inside the ground for thirty thousand divine years. O great king! After this, the earth arrived and bowed down before Kashyapa. She became the daughter of the great-souled Kashyapa. O king! This was the nature of the brahmana Kashyapa. Tell me about another one, or a kshatriya, who is superior to Kashyapa.'"

‘Bhishma continued, “The king was silent and Pavana[1390] spoke again. ‘O king! Hear about Utathya, born in the lineage of Angiras. Soma had a daughter named Bhadra and she was held to be supremely beautiful. Soma saw that Utathya would be an unmatched husband for her. For this purpose, the immensely fortunate and illustrious lady tormented herself through extremely fierce austerities. She wished to obtain the immensely fortunate Utathya as a husband. He[1391] invited Utathya and gave away the illustrious one as a wife and he received her in the proper way, with a lot of dakshina. The handsome Varuna had desired her earlier. He arrived in the forest and when she was bathing in the Yamuna, stole her. Abducting her, the lord of the waters took her away to his own city, which was extremely wonderful and had six hundred thousand lakes. There was nothing that was more beautiful or better than that city. There were palaces with divine apsaras and all the beautiful objects of pleasure. O king! The god, the lord of the waters, sported with her there. Utathya got to know about the way his wife was being oppressed. He heard everything from Narada. Utathya spoke to Narada. “Go and speak harsh words to Varuna. Report my words that he should release my wife. Why has he abducted her? He is a protector of the worlds and their people. He is not a destroyer of the worlds. Soma gave me this wife and he has abducted her.” Addressed in these words, Narada went to the lord of the waters and told him, “Release Utathya’s wife. That is what Utathya has asked me to tell you.” However, Varuna told him, “I love this wife a great deal and I am unwilling to let her go.” Thus addressed by Varuna, Narada returned to the sage alone. Distressed, he spoke these words to Utathya. “O great sage! Varuna seized me by the throat and threw me out. He did not give me your wife. Do what you must.” Hearing Narada’s words, the one from the Angiras lineage blazed in rage. Using his energy, the extremely great ascetic stupefied the waters and drunk them up. When all the waters were drunk up, the lord of the waters and his well-wishers began to be destroyed. But he still did not release her. Enraged, Utathya, supreme among brahmanas, spoke to the earth. “O fortunate one! There are six hundred thousand lakes. Instead, show me land there.” At this, the ocean retreated and a creek[1392] was created there. The supreme among brahmanas told the rivers that flowed through the region, “O Sarasvati! O timid one! Become invisible here. Instead, go towards the desert. O beautiful one! Abandon this region and make it inauspicious from now on.” When the region was thus destroyed, the lord of the waters took the fortunate lady and returned the wife to the one born in the Angiras lineage. Having obtained his wife back, Utathya was happy. O Haihaya! He released Varuna from his miserable plight. After having got his wife back, the one who knew about dharma, Utathya, the extremely energetic one, spoke to Varuna. O lord of men! Listen to what he said. “O lord of the waters! You suffered these hardships because of my austerities.” Having said this, he took his wife and returned to his own house. O king! Utathya, bull among brahmanas, was like this. I have told you about him. Tell me about a kshatriya who is superior to Utathya.’”’

## Chapter 1821(140)

‘Bhishma said, “Thus addressed, he was silent and Vayu spoke again. ‘O king! Listen to the greatness of the brahmana Agastya. Once, defeated by the asuras, the gods lost all their enthusiasm. All their sacrifices were appropriated and also the svadha that was due to the ancestors. O

bull among the Haihaya lineage! The danavas stopped rites performed by men. We have heard that the gods were dislodged from their prosperity and began to wander around on earth. O king! While doing this, they saw Agastya. He was full of energy and was engaged in great vows. He blazed like the sun in his radiance. On seeing him, surrounded by his fame, the gods worshipped him. O lord of men! At that time, they spoke these words to the great-souled one. “We have been shattered by the danavas in the battle. We have been dislodged from our prosperity. Therefore, we are suffering from great fear. O bull among sages! Save us.” Thus addressed by the gods, Agastya became angry. The energetic one blazed, like the fire at the time of the destruction of a yuga. The danavas were burnt down by the net of his flaming rays. O great king! In thousands, they fell down from the firmament. The daityas were burnt down by Agastya’s energy. They abandoned both the worlds[1393] and sought refuge in the inauspicious southern direction. At that time, Bali was performing a horse sacrifice in the nether regions of the earth. He and the other great asuras who were in the bowels of the earth were saved and were not burnt down. The gods again got the worlds back, tranquil and without any dust. The gods said, “Slay the asuras who are hidden inside the earth.” O king! Addressed by the gods, he replied, “I am capable of using my austerities to burn down those who are inside the earth. However, if I burn them down, my austerities will be diminished.” Nevertheless, the illustrious one used his own energy to burn down the danavas. O king! Thus did Agastya, cleansed in soul, use his austerities. O unblemished one! I have told you about Agastya’s powers. I have spoken about him to you. Tell me is there is a kshatriya superior to him.’ Thus addressed, he was silent.

‘“Vayu spoke again. ‘O king! Listen to the great deeds performed by the illustrious Vasishtha. Once, the gods performed a sacrifice near Lake Manasa. Because of Vasishtha’s learning, they mentally approached him and made him the officiating priest. They were anxious about initiating themselves into that sacrifice and became lean in the process. There were danavas named Khalinas, with complexions like those of mountains, and they wanted to slay the gods. However, they were repeatedly slain, from a distance. But they had been granted a boon by Brahma. Therefore, as soon as they were killed, they immersed themselves in the waters of the lake and came back to life again. They seized extremely terrible mountains and used trees as clubs. With these, they arose from the waters and agitated them so much that it extended for hundreds of yojanas. They attacked the tens of thousands of gods. Oppressed by them, the gods sought refuge with Vasava. However, Shakra was also afflicted and sought refuge with Vasishtha. The illustrious rishi, Vasishtha, granted them freedom from fear. The sage wasn’t cruel. But he also knew about their misery. Almost carelessly, he used his own energy to burn down all the Khalinas. The river Ganga had left for Kailasa. But the greatly ascetic one brought the divine river to the lake and she penetrated the waters of the lake. When the water was penetrated, the river began to flow as Sarayu. The region where the Khalinas were killed came to be known as Khalina. Thus did Vasishtha protect Indra and the residents of heaven. Despite the supreme boon they had received from Brahma, the daityas were killed by the great-souled one. O unblemished one! I have thus spoken to you about Vasishtha’s deeds. I have told you about them. Tell me if there is a kshatriya who is superior to Vasishtha.’”’

# Chapter 1822(141)

‘Bhishma said, “Thus addressed, Arjuna was silent and Vayu spoke again. ‘O best among the Haihaya lineage! Listen to the deeds of the extremely great-souled Atri. Once upon a time, there was a terrible battle between the gods and the danavas. Svarbhanu[1394] pierced the sun and the moon with his arrows. O tiger among kings! Devoured by darkness, the gods were slain by the danavas, together with the sacrificial animals. Struck by the asuras, the residents of heaven began to lose their lives. They saw the brahmana Atri performing austerities in a great forest. He had conquered his senses and all his rage had been pacified. The gods spoke to him. “Both the moon and the sun have been struck by the arrows of the asuras. We are being killed and have been enveloped by the enemies. O lord! We cannot find peace and there is nothing to save us from our fear.” He asked, “How can I save you?” They said, “You become the moon. You become the sun, the dispeller of darkness. Become the one who slays these bandits.” Thus addressed, Atri became the sun and the moon. He showed his amiable form as the moon and he also showed himself as the sun. O king! Seeing that the sun and the moon had lost their radiance, in that battle, Atri used the power of his austerities to display himself in those forms. The universe was covered in darkness, but he illuminated everything again. With his own energy, he destroyed the large numbers of enemies of the gods. The gods saw that the giant asuras were being burnt down by Atri. Protected by Atri, they used their valour to slay their enemies. In his form as the sun, he saved the gods and slew the asuras. Using his supreme energy, Atri became the moon. The sage, who meditated and was attired in skins, had no second. He subsisted on fruits. O rajarshi! But behold the deeds Atri performed. In detail, I have spoken to you about the deeds of the extremely great-souled Atri. I have told you. You tell me if there is a kshatriya who is superior to Atri. O king! Listen to the great deeds that the great-souled Chyavana performed. Having given his promise to the Ashvins, Chyavana spoke to the chastiser of Paka and to all the other gods and said, “Give the Ashvins a share of the soma.” Indra replied, “We have cast them away.[1395] How can we give them soma? They are not revered as gods. Therefore, we cannot do what you have asked us to. O one who is great in vows! We do not desire to drink soma with the Ashvins. Let anyone else who desires to drink with them do so. We are not interested in drinking with them.” Chyavana said, “O slayer of Bala! You should not act against the words that I have spoken. Forced by me, you will drink soma with them at a sacrifice.” With the Ashvins and for their benefit, Chyavana started a rite and as a result of the mantras, sura manifested itself. On seeing that he had started the rite, Indra became senseless with rage. He raised a huge mountain and attacked Chyavana. With intolerance in his eyes, he also attacked the illustrious one with his vajra. Chyavana was full of austerities. On seeking that he was advancing, he sprinkled some water on him, the vajra and the mountain and thereby paralysed him. The great sage also created an extremely terrible enemy for Indra. He used mantras to summon Mada, with a gaping mouth. He possessed one thousand teeth that extended for one hundred yojanas. His extremely terrible jaws extended for two hundred yojanas. One of the jaws rested on earth, while the other one rose up and touched heaven. All the gods, together with Vasava, were stuck at the base of his tongue. They were like fish in the great ocean, in the process of being devoured by a whale. Because

of the invocation of the mantras, the gods entered Mada's mouth. With Shakra, all of them said, "We bow down before brahmanas. Without any anxiety, we will drink soma with the Ashvins." Shakra bowed down before Chyavana. Thus did Chyavana ensure that the Ashvins would drink soma. The sage withdrew Mada and instructed him about the tasks that he should henceforth do.[1396] The valiant one was instructed to reside in dice, hunting, liquor and women. O king! There is no doubt that men confront destruction because of these sins. Therefore, men must always avoid them from a distance. O king! I have thus recounted to you Chyavana's deeds. I have told you about this. Tell me if there is a kshatriya superior to Chyavana.'"'

## Chapter 1823(142)

'Bhishma said, "Arjuna was silent and the wind god spoke again. 'O lord of men! Listen to what that foremost of brahmanas did. Indra and all the other residents of heaven were engulfed in Mada's mouth. At that time, Chyavana took the earth away from them. Since both the worlds had been taken away from them, the gods were distressed. Afflicted with grief, they sought refuge with the great-souled Brahma.'

'"The gods said, 'O one who is worshipped by the worlds! We have been seized by Mada's mouth. O lord! Chyavana has seized the earth and the Kapas[1397] have taken over heaven.'

'"Brahma replied, 'O residents of heaven! With Indra, quickly go and seek refuge with the brahmanas. With their favours, you will obtain back the worlds, as in earlier times.'

'"The wind god continued, 'They went and sought refuge. However, the brahmanas asked, "Whom will we subjugate?" They told the brahmanas, "Defeat the Kapas." However, the brahmanas responded that they could only vanquish those who were on earth. Nevertheless, the brahmanas initiated rites to destroy the Kapas. Hearing this, the Kapas sent a messenger named Dhani to the brahmanas. Dhani conveyed the words of the Kapas to the brahmanas. "All of the Kapas are exactly like you. Why have you embarked on this task? All of them are knowledgable about the Vedas. All of them are wise. All of them observe the rites and the sacrifices. All of them follow the vows of truth. All of them are equal to the maharshis. Shri[1398] roams happily amidst them and they also sustain Shri. They do not pointlessly seek intercourse with the wives of others. They do not pointlessly eat meat. They offer oblations into the blazing fire. They follow the words of their preceptors. All of them are restrained in their souls. They give children their shares. They travel on vehicles together.[1399] They do not have intercourse during the menstrual period. They do not eat when others are unfed. They do not sleep during the day. The Kapas possess these and many other qualities. Why do you wish to conquer them? Refrain. It will be better for you to withdraw." The brahmanas replied, "We will defeat the Kapas. We have promised the gods this. Therefore, the Kapas deserve to be slain by us. O Dhani! Return to where you came from." Dhani went and told the Kapas that the brahmanas wouldn't do what was agreeable to them. Therefore, all the Kapas seized weapons and attacked the brahmanas. The brahmanas saw that all the Kapas were advancing, with upraised standards. They released blazing fire at the Kapas, designed to destroy their lives. The brahmanas released those eternal fires, meant to devour the Kapas. O lord of men! They blazed in the firmament, like clouds. Because of this energy, the energy

and valour of the gods increased. They praised the brahmanas and the illustrious Brahma. They got their immortality back and were worshipped in the three worlds.’”

‘Bhishma continued, “Hearing Vayu’s words, Arjuna worshipped him and replied. O mighty-armed one! O lord of men! Hear what he said. ‘O lord! In every way, I always remain alive for the sake of brahmanas. I always bow down before Brahma and brahmanas. I have obtained this fame through Dattatreya’s favours. That is the reason I have been able to perform supreme deeds in this world and have observed great dharma. O wind god! I have heard the truth about the deeds of the brahmanas. You have told me everything and I have listened attentively.’ Vayu replied, ‘Use your senses and the dharma of kshatriyas to protect brahmanas. There is a terrible danger to you from the Bhrigu lineage.[1400] But that will occur in the distant future.’”’

## Chapter 1824(143)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “O king! You always worship brahmanas who are rigid in their vows. O lord of men! What do you see as the outcome of those acts of revering them? O one who is great in vows! What do you see as the prosperity obtained from worshipping brahmanas? O mighty-armed one! Tell me everything about worshipping them.”

‘Bhishma replied, “This Keshava, extremely intelligent, will tell you everything about the prosperity obtained from worshipping brahmanas and about the prosperity that has been seen from observing great vows. My strength, hearing, speech, mind, years and knowledge are no longer as pure as they used to be. I do not think that there is a great deal of time left for me to give up my body. The sun seems to move very slowly. The dharma for brahmanas, kshatriyas and vaishyas, as stated in the great Puranas, and the rods of chastisement that have been laid down in the Puranas, have been stated by me. O Partha! Let Krishna instruct you about what remains. I know the truth about Krishna and about his ancient strength. O Indra among Kouravas! Keshava is immeasurable in his soul. He will speak to you about doubts on dharma. Krishna created the earth, the sky and heaven. Terrible in his strength, he is the ancient boar. The firmament, heaven, the four directions and the four sub-directions are subservient to him. Everything in this ancient universe was created by him and originates in him. He is without a sense of ownership. A lotus was generated from his navel and the infinitely energetic Svayambhu emerged from that. O Partha! It is he who dispelled that terrible darkness which pervaded the primeval ocean. He existed in the form of all the dharma in krita yuga. In treta yuga, he existed in the form of knowledge. O Partha! In dvapara yuga, Krishna exists in the form of strength. In kali yuga, he will be on earth in the form of adharma. He is the god who slew the daityas earlier. He is the ancient god who became an emperor. He is the creator of beings. He is the creator of future beings. He is the protector of the world and the universe. When dharma suffers, Krishna is born among gods and men. Cleansed in his soul and based on dharma, he establishes the superior and the inferior worlds. Sparing those who should be spared, he slays the asuras. O Partha! He is good and bad deeds and their reason. The god does what needs to be done. He is also what will be done. Again, know that he is Soma and Shakra. He is Vishvakarma. He is the one who has the universe as his form. He brings prosperity to the universe. He is the one who destroys the universe.

He wields the trident. He is covered in blood. He is fierce. He is known by his deeds and everyone praises him. The gandharvas, the apsaras and hundreds of gods always worship him. The rakshasas bear him. He is the bringer of prosperity. He alone is the victorious one. He is honoured and praised in the sacrifices. He is praised in the *rathantara* hymns of the Sama Veda. The brahmanas praise him in mantras about the brahman. It is to him that the officiating priests offer oblations. He is the ancient Brahma, shrouded in mystery. O foremost among the Bharatas! He is seen in the great sacrifices. He is the one who is fierce in deeds, the savior of cattle.[1401] He is the one who agitates the daityas and the danavas and those who are devoted to them. He is the one to whom the many kinds of food are given. He is the one to whom the horses and the mounts are rendered. He is the one who protects earth and heaven. Everything is under the eternal one's subjugation. He is the ancient one whose seed fell into the pot. The rishi Vasishtha is said to have originated from that. He is the wind god. He is the powerful Ashvins. He is the rays of the sun. He is the first god. All the asuras were defeated by him. In three steps, he conquered them with his valour.[1402] He exists in gods, men and the ancestors. Those who know about sacrifices speak of him as abundance. He is the one who rises in the morning and divides time. He is the two ayanas of uttarayana and dakshinayana. His rays move upwards, downwards and diagonally and heat the earth. He is the one who is praised by brahmanas who know about the Vedas. It is from him that the sun obtains its radiance. From one month to another month, he is the one who is sanctified in sacrifices. Those who know about the Vedas recite his name at sacrifices. He is like a single wheel with three naves, borne by seven horses in the three worlds.[1403] He is immensely energetic. He goes everywhere. He is the one who is supremely powerful. Krishna alone holds up the worlds. He is the food. He is the devourer. He is the patient one. O Partha! Krishna is always the doer. Once, in the form of deadwood, the great-souled lord satisfied the fire god[1404] in Khandava. He vanquished the rakshasas and those who were devoted to them. He goes everywhere. He is all the fires to whom libations are offered. He is the single horse from whom all the white horses originated. He is the single horse which led to all the horses being created. His chariot has three seats for the driver and three wheels. It has three kinds of motion and four horses.[1405] He is the refuge of the five elements. The earth, the firmament and heaven are in him, though he is without a sense of ownership. Hrishikesha, the infinitely resplendent one, as energetic as the fire, created these beautiful mountains. The wielder of the vajra crossed the waters in an attempt to cause him violence and strike him, but was repulsed. The great Indra praises him in great sacrifices. The brahmanas speak about the ancient one in thousands of hymns from the Rig Veda. No one other than him was capable of hosting the immensely energetic Durvasa in his house. He is spoken of as the single and ancient rishi. He is immersed in adhyatma and he is the creator of the universe. He is the original god who makes the Vedas known. He is the one who follows the ancient rituals. He is Vishvaksena. All the objects of desire, everything in the Vedas and all the fruits desired in the world flow from him. He is the white light in all the worlds. He is the three guardians of the worlds in the three worlds. He is the three fires. He is the three kinds of speech.[1406] Devaki's son is all the gods together. He is the year. He is the seasons. He is the fortnights. He is day. He is night. He is *kala* and *kashtha.* He is *matra, muhurta, lava* and *kshana.*[1407] Vishvaksena is in all of these. He is the moon and the sun. He is the planets, the nakshatras and the stars. He is everything that can be seen on the night of the full moon. O Partha! He is the conjunction of the nakshatras and the seasons. All of these are created out of Vishvaksena. The

Rudras, the Adityas, the Vasus, the Ashvins, the Sadhyas, the Vishvadevas, the large number of Maruts, Prajapati, Aditi, the mother of the gods and the saptarshis—all of them are in Krishna. He becomes the wind and agitates the universe. He becomes the fire and burns the universe. His form is the universe. He becomes water and submerges everything. He becomes Brahma and creates the large numbers in the universe. He learns everything that is in the Vedas. But he is the Vedas. He follows the ordinances. But he is the ordinances. He is dharma, the Vedas and strength. Know that Keshava is everything mobile and immobile. He manifests himself as supreme light. He is the radiance that is in front of us. In his form as the universe, he illuminates everything. From his own self, he first created water and then everything else in the universe. He is the origin of the wonderful and varied seasons. He is the clouds and lightning and everything else. He is Airavata. Everything mobile and immobile is Krishna. He is famous in the universe. Know him to be Vishnu. He is the abode of the universe. He is devoid of qualities. He is Vasudeva. As life in creatures, he is Samkarshana and is worshipped. He is Pradyumna. He is Aniruddha in his fourth form.[1408] From his own self, the great-souled one manifested himself to us in these forms. Desiring to create this universe with its five kinds of beings,[1409] he divided himself into five elements. O Partha! He thus created earth, wind, space, light and water. He created mobile and immobile objects and the four kinds of beings.[1410] He created the earth and sowed the five kinds of seed.[1411] He created the firmament, so that it could shower down on earth. O king! He created the universe. It is he who created all creatures from his own self. The lord of creatures always desires to create and brought together everything—the gods, the asuras, men, the worlds, the rishis, the ancestors and the subjects. Know that everything good and bad, mobile and immobile—flows from Vishvaksena. Everything that exists and everything that will exist—know that everything flows from Keshava. When it is time for creatures to die and the time of destruction presents itself, it is Krishna who is the eternal and direct conveyor of dharma. Know that every creature in the universe and everything else originates in Vishvaksena. Everything that is praised in this world, everything auspicious, everything good and bad is Keshava, who is himself inconceivable. There is no reason to hold an opposite view. Keshava is like this. He is Svayambhu. He is the supreme and undecaying Narayana. He is the beginning and the end of all creatures and he is also their middle. The universe vests in him."'

## Chapter 1825(144)

'Yudhishthira said, "O Madhusudana! Tell us about the prosperity that comes from worshipping brahmanas. Our grandfather knows you. And you know about the purport of everything."

'Vasudeva replied, "O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Hear attentively to the truth about brahmanas. O supreme among the Kuru lineage! I will speak to you about their qualities. Once, Pradyumna[1412] was enraged by some brahmanas and asked, 'O Madhusudana! What are the fruits associated with worshipping brahmanas? In this world and in the world hereafter, how do they get that sovereignty? O one who deserves honours! What are the fruits from constantly worshipping brahmanas? O father! Tell me everything about this. In this connection, I have a great doubt.' I was addressed in these words by Pradyumna and replied. O great king! Listen attentively to what I said. 'O

Rukmini's son! Listen to the prosperity that comes from worshipping brahmanas. They are Somarajas.[1413] They are the lords of happiness and unhappiness and prosperity, in this world and in the next. O Rukmini's son! O son! Brahmanas are the best of friends. There is no need to think about this. In this world, the brahmanas are foremost in valour, lifespans, deeds, fame and strength. Among all those who roam around in the world, brahmanas are the foremost. O son! How can one disrespect those who are like lords? O mighty-armed one! You should not display any rage towards brahmanas. In this world and in the next world, brahmanas are great beings. If they are angry, they can burn down the entire universe and this can be instantly seen. They are capable of creating worlds and those who roam around in those worlds. They possess knowledge and energy. Why should one not treat them properly? O son! A brahmana resided in my house and his complexion was tawny. He was dressed in rags and he had a staff made out of a bilva tree. His hair and nails were long. He was a tall man and there was no one taller than him on earth. He wandered around the worlds of gods and men, singing a chant at public squares and assemblies. "Who will honour the brahmana Durvasa by inviting him to reside in his house? Hearing my words, who will dare to grant me refuge? If someone accepts me as a guest, he must not enrage me." Since no one invited him, I invited him to come and live with me. On some days, he would eat food that could be eaten by many thousands of people alone. Some days, he would eat very little. Some days, he would go out of the house and not return. He would suddenly laugh and suddenly cry. At that time, there was no one on earth who was his equal in rage. On one occasion, he entered his living quarters and burnt down the beds, the spreads and the ornamented maidens who were there to serve him. Having done this, he left. On another occasion, the sage, rigid in his vows, told me, "O Krishna! I wish to eat some payasam. Fetch it quickly." I always got to know what he had in mind beforehand. Therefore, I had instructed all the people in the house to keep every kind of food and drink ready. I thus brought him the food he wanted. Having known in advance, I treated him with every honour. I brought some flaming hot payasam and offered it to him. Having quickly eaten it, he spoke these words to me. "Swiftly smear this payasam on your limbs." Without any hesitation, I did what he had asked me to. I smeared my body and my head with what was left. At that time, he saw that your mother, the one with the beautiful face, was standing nearby. Smiling, he smeared the payasam on her too. The sage suddenly yoked her, with payasam smeared all over her limbs, to his chariot and left my house. The intelligent brahmana blazed, with a complexion like that of the fire. While I looked on, he yoked the young Rukmini like a beast of burden to his chariot and goaded her. Despite this, I did not exhibit the least bit of sorrow or jealousy. He went out, along a large royal road. On witnessing this great wonder, some from the Dasharha lineage were overcome by rage. They spoke to each other and conversed among themselves. "Let only brahmanas be born. Let no other varnas be born. Which other man could have used his chariot in this way and remained alive? The venom from a virulent serpent is the sharpest among all kinds of poison. But this is sharper than that poison. When one is burnt by the poison of a brahmana, no physician exists." When the unassailable one advanced in this way, Rukmini tottered and fell down on the road. Intolerant, the handsome one quickly goaded her. Extremely angry, the brahmana descended from the chariot. He advanced along the path on foot and headed towards the southern direction. With payasam smeared all over our limbs, we followed that rushing supreme among brahmanas along the path. We said, "O illustrious one! Be pacified." The energetic brahmana looked towards me and replied, "O Krishna! O

mighty-armed one! Using your nature, you have conquered anger. O one who is excellent in vows! I do not see any crime in you. O Govinda! Ask for the boon that you desire. O son![1414] I am pleased with you. Behold the prosperity I can confer. As long as men have a liking for food, they will exhibit the same liking towards you, as they do towards their food. As long as anything auspicious remains in the worlds, your fame will also remain. You will obtain supremacy in the three worlds. O Janardana! You will be extremely loved in the worlds. O Janardana! Each of your objects that have been shattered, burnt or destroyed, will be restored, in a better form than earlier. O Madhusudana! O Achyuta! Because you have smeared your body, as long as you wish, you will not suffer any fear from death. O son! Why did you not smear the soles of your feet too? Acting in that way, you have not done something that is agreeable to me." Pleased with me, he spoke to me in that way. When he said this, I myself saw that my body had become radiant and handsome. Delighted, he told Rukmini, "O beautiful one! You will be supreme among women in fame and deeds. You will be supreme in the worlds. You will not suffer from old age or disease. You will not lose your complexion. With an auspicious fragrance emanating from your body, you will be seen to be worshipping Krishna. Keshava will have sixteen thousand wives. But you will be foremost among them and will obtain the worlds with Keshava." Having said this to your mother, he again addressed me. "O Keshava! May your intelligence always be directed in this way, towards brahmanas." The extremely energetic Durvasa, blazing like the fire, then departed. O son! Having said this, he vanished. Having instructed me about this radiant vow, he disappeared. O lord! I have done everything that the brahmana told me about. O son! With your mother, I have observed that vow. Cheerful in our souls, we entered the house. O son! When we entered our house, we found that everything had become new, all that had been destroyed or burnt down by the brahmana. Seeing that everything had become new and firm, I was overcome by great wonder. O Rukmini's son! I mentally worshipped the brahmana.' O bull among the Bharata lineage! When Rukmini's son asked me, I thus told him everything about the greatness of that foremost among brahmanas. You should always worship those immensely fortunate and eloquent ones with gifts. In this way, through the favours of brahmanas, I obtained prosperity. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Everything that Bhishma has said about me is true."'

## Chapter 1826(145)

'Yudhishthira said, "O Madhusudana! You should explain to me the vijnana you obtained through Durvasa's favours. O supreme among intelligent ones! I wish to know the truth about the names of that immensely fortunate and great-souled one."

'Vasudeva replied, "After bowing down to Kapardin,[1415] I will recount them to you. O great king! It is through this that I obtained what is beneficial. It is through this that I obtained fame. O lord of the earth! When I arise in the morning, I control myself, join my hands in salutation and recite the shatarudriya.[1416] Listen attentively to this. At the end of his austerities, the great ascetic, Prajapati, created him.[1417] O son! It is Shankara who created all the subjects, mobile and immobile. O lord of the earth! There is no other being who is superior to Mahadeva. He is the creator of all the beings in the three worlds. No one is capable of standing before that great-souled one. There is no being who is

his equal in the three worlds. When he is enraged in battle, his scent makes the enemies tremble, lose their senses and fall down. Those that remain are slain. His fierce roars are like the thunder of the clouds. On hearing these in a battle, even the hearts of the gods are shattered. When the wielder of the Pinaka is angry, he assumes a terrible form. On seeing this wrathful visage, the gods, the asuras, the gandharvas and the serpents in the worlds can find no peace, not even when they seek shelter inside caves. Prajapati Daksha wished to perform a sacrifice. When that sacrifice was spread out, the fearless Bhava[1418] roared loudly. He angrily shot an arrow from his bow and struck that sacrifice. There was no peace or tranquility then and the gods were filled with sorrow. Enraged, Maheshvara sought to violently strike the sacrifice. O Partha! All the worlds were anxious at the sound of his bowstring slapping against his palm. The gods and the asuras were incapacitated and miserable. The oceans were agitated and the earth began to tremble. The mountains started to move and the firmament was shattered. The worlds were enveloped in a blinding darkness and nothing could be seen. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The radiance of the sun and all the stellar bodies was destroyed. Everyone was extremely terrified. Desiring the welfare of all the creatures and of their own selves, the rishis pronounced benedictions of peace. The valorous Rudra angrily rushed towards the gods. In rage, he struck Bhaga and tore out his eyes. He then attacked the handsome Pushan. As he ate the sacrificial cake, he struck down his[1419] teeth. Trembling with fear, the gods bowed down before Shankara. Rudra again affixed an extremely sharp and blazing arrow. Witnessing Rudra's valour, the gods and the rishis were terrified. The supreme among the gods sought Sharva's[1420] favours. The gods joined their hands in salutation and meditated on the *shatarudriya* mantra. Praised by the thirty gods, Maheshvara was pacified. O king! Scared, the thirty gods sought refuge with me and earmarked a special share in the sacrificial offerings for Rudra. Because of his great anger, the sacrifice had been divided into many parts and these were brought together again. Everything that had been destroyed was restored.

'"In ancient times, the valiant asuras had three cities in the firmament and these were made out of iron, silver and gold. Despite using all his weapons, Maghavan was incapable of shattering them. Afflicted, all the immortals sought refuge with Rudra. All the assembled gods spoke to the great-souled one. 'O Rudra! Those animals are terrible in all their acts. O one who deserves honours! To save the worlds, slay the daityas and destroy their cities.' He agreed. Having agreed, he made Vishnu his supreme arrow. He made Agni the shaft of the arrow and Vaivasvata Yama the tuft. He made the Vedas his bow and the supreme Savitri the bowstring. He yoked all the gods to his supreme chariot. He shattered them with an arrow that had three joints and three heads. That arrow was like the sun in its complexion. It was like the fire of destruction in its energy. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The asuras and their cities were burnt down by Rudra.

'"Later, on seeing Panchashikha[1421] lying down on her lap in the form of a child, Uma asked, 'Who are you?' Shakra was jealous[1422] and struck him with the vajra. However, he paralysed the arm, which was like a club, with the hand still holding the vajra. The gods did not understand that this was the lord of the universe. With the Prajapatis, all of them were repeatedly confused about the lord's nature. The illustrious and infinitely energetic Brahma meditated and got to know that this was the foremost one. He worshipped Uma and her consort. The gods also sought the favours of Uma and Rudra. The arm of Bala's slayer was restored to its normal state.

‘“He became a valiant brahmana named Durvasa. He spent a long period of time in my house in Dvaravati. While residing in my house, he tried to perform many injurious acts. Though difficult to tolerate, I ignored them because of my generosity.[1423] He is Indra of the gods. He is Vayu. He is the Ashvins. He is lightning. He is the moon. He is Ishana. He is the sun. He is Varuna. He is time. He is the destroyer. He is death. He is darkness. He is night. He is day. He is the months. He is the fortnights. He is the seasons. He is the sandhyas. He is the years. He is the creator. He is the ordainer. He is Vishvakarma. He is the one who knows everything. He is the nakshatras. He is the directions. He is the sub-directions. He is the planets. The universe is his form. His soul cannot be measured. The illustrious one is infinitely resplendent. He is one. He is two. He is also many. He is one hundred. He is one thousand. He is also hundreds of thousands. This is the nature of Mahadeva, the illustrious one. Even if I try for one hundred years, I am incapable of speaking about his qualities.”’

## Chapter 1827(146)

‘Vasudeva said, “O Yudhishthira! O mighty-armed one! V Listen to me. I will recite the names of the immensely fortunate and great-souled Rudra, who has many forms. He is spoken of as Agni, Mahadeva, Sthanu, Maheshvara, Ekaksha,[1424] Tryambaka,[1425]Vishvarupa and Shiva. Brahmanas who know about the Vedas say that the god has two forms—one is terrible and the other is auspicious. Those forms are again divided into many others. The form that is fierce and terrible is equated with fire, lightning and the sun. The form that is auspicious and benign is equated with dharma, water and the moon. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Half of his body is also said to be the fire, while the half that is auspicious is said to follow brahmacharya. The fiercest of his forms is the one which destroys the universe and is said to be the great lord or Maheshvara. He burns down. He is sharp. He is fierce. He is powerful. Since he subsists on flesh, blood and marrow, he is said to be Rudra.[1426] He is great among all the gods and his dominion is vast. Since he saves the great universe, he is known to be Mahadeva.[1427] In everything that he does, in every way, he seeks to ensure what is auspicious for men. That is the reason he is known as Shiva.[1428] Remaining established above, he burns everything down. He is established in one place for the origins of life. He is always immobile in the form of a lingam. That is the reason he is spoken of as Sthanu.[1429] He has many different kinds of forms. He is the past, the present and the future. He is immobile and mobile. That is the reason be is said to be Bahurupa.[1430] He is said be Dhurjati because he has the form of smoke.[1431] The Vishvadevas are in him. That is the reason he is said to be Vishvarupa. He possesses one thousand eyes. He possesses ten thousand eyes. He has eyes in every direction. His energy and power flow through his eyes. He destroys through his eyes. He nourishes creatures and also sports with them in every way. Since he is their lord, he is said to be Pashupati.[1432] He is established in the form of a lingam and always practises brahmacharya. Since he ensures greatness in the worlds, he is known as Maheshvara. A great-souled person should worship his image and his lingam. A person who worships the lingam always obtains great prosperity. The rishis, the gods, the gandharvas and the apsaras always worship the lingam, which is stationed, facing upwards. When worshipped, the person who provides delight is Maheshvara. He is affectionate towards his devotees. Cheerful in his soul, he grants happiness to his

devotees. This god always resides in cremation grounds. People who worship him there obtain the regions meant for heroes. In the bodies of creatures which face hardship, he exists in the form of death. In the form of the breath of life in the bodies of embodied beings, he exists as prana and apana. He has many terrible and blazing forms. These are also worshipped in the worlds and are known to learned brahmanas and the gods. He has many other names and meanings that are spoken about in the Vedas, based on his greatness, powers and deeds. Learned brahmanas recite the supreme shatarudriya from the Vedas. The great-souled Vyasa articulated it thereafter. He is said to be the great one who has provided all the worlds and the universe. That is the reason brahmanas and other rishis speak of him as the first being. He is first among the gods and Agni was generated from his mouth. In creating and sustaining many kinds of life, he faces various difficulties. He is the one who grants refuge. He saves the pure-souled ones who seek refuge and grants long lives, freedom from disease, prosperity, riches and all the objects of desire. He confers these on men and takes them away again. He is said to be the prosperity of Shakra and the other gods. In addition, he is always all the good and the evil that exists in the three worlds. He is said to be Ishvara because he is prosperity and all the objects of desire. Since he is the great lord of the worlds, he is known as Maheshvara. He pervades the universe in many kinds of different forms. This god's mouth exists in the ocean in the form of the mare-headed fire."'[1433]

## Chapter 1828(147)

Vaishmapayana said, 'When Krishna, Devaki's son, spoke these words, Yudhishthira again asked Bhishma, Shantanu's son. "O immensely intelligent one! O supreme among those who uphold all kinds of dharma! In determining the reason behind anything, should one depend on direct perception or the sacred texts?"

'Bhishma replied, "It is my view that there should be no scope for doubt on this. O wise one! Listen to me. I will answer your question properly. O king! It is easy to have a doubt. It is extremely difficult to arrive at a determination. There are innumerable instances where there are doubts about what one has seen and what one has heard.[1434] There are those who are proud of their wisdom and are skilled in debating. They say that direct perception can be the only proof. They hold that everything that cannot be perceived is non-existent and cannot be true. However, even if they pride themselves on their learning, people who speak in this way are nothing but foolish. Or perhaps you may doubt how a single entity[1435] can be the cause. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is only capable of being comprehended by those who have fixed their senses and tried for a long period of time, thinking of this alone in the journey of life. No one other than such a person is capable of comprehending this single cause. This is the ultimate cause. When one reaches it, one has obtained supreme knowledge. This[1436] is extensive radiance that illuminates all the worlds. O king! When one reaches that truth, one reaches the ultimate cause. It cannot be grasped or bound down through words and those methods must be avoided."

'Yudhishthira said, "O grandfather! Tell me about direct perception, what other people have proclaimed as leading to success, the ancient sacred texts that exist in the world and the many kinds of

virtuous conduct."

'Bhishma replied, "When dharma suffers through the strength of evil-souled people, it can be re-established for a short period of time by making efforts. Dharma, like grass, can cover the mouth of a well that is full of adharma. O Yudhishthira! However, listen to what happens. Those who are wicked in conduct and have discarded the sacred texts, those who are sinful and hate dharma, attack this good conduct and doubts arise because of what they say. Those who are satisfied at this state of affairs must approach virtuous people who possess the knowledge of the sacred texts and ask them. That will lead to satisfaction. Turn your back on desire and also on greed and confusion, which are followers. Approach learned people and ask them about dharma. Their conduct and tasks of sacrifices and studying never suffer. These three kinds of behaviour[1437] are also the foundations of dharma."

'Yudhishthira asked, "My intelligence is again confused by a doubt. It is as if I cannot find a path to cross over and cannot even see the distant shore. If the Vedas, direct perception[1438] and conduct are the three yardsticks, they are seen to be different. If dharma is one, how can it be of three different types?"

'Bhishma replied "Dharma is seen to sometimes suffer because of the strength of evil-souled ones. O king! That is the reason you reflect and think that dharma is of three different types. Know that it flows as one, but can manifest itself in three different ways. That is the reason one's intelligence thinks of it in three different forms. Truthfully follow the three different paths that have been laid down. You should never question dharma or hear about it being reviled. O best among the Bharata lineage! There should be no doubt about this. Without any hesitation, follow what I have said, like a person who is blind and dumb. O Ajatashatru![1439] Non-violence, truth, lack of anger and generosity as the fourth—following these is eternal dharma. Follow your fathers and grandfathers in behaviour towards brahmanas. O mighty-armed one! These are the methods to reach the region of heaven. An ignorant man who is concerned with proof and lack of proof does not deserve to get any proof. He only generates debate. Respect brahmanas greatly, serve them and treat them well. Listen to me. All these worlds are established on them."'

## Chapter 1829(148)

'Yudhishthira said, "Tell me about the ends obtained by those who censure dharma and those who follow it. O illustrious one! Where do they go?"

'Bhishma replied, "There are those whose consciousness is overwhelmed by rajas and tamas. These men hate dharma and go to hell. O great king! A man who always serves dharma and is devoted to truth and uprightness is virtuous and enjoys heaven. Because they serve their preceptors, they are devoted to dharma. Those who serve dharma obtain the world of the gods. Whether they are men or gods, if they are devoid of greed and hatred and if they give up their lives in the pursuit of dharma, they obtain happiness. The learned say that Brahma's first son was Dharma. Those who follow dharma enjoy the ripe fruits that are desired."

'Yudhishthira asked, "What is the form of those who are wicked? What do virtuous people do? Tell me about the nature of virtuous and wicked people."

‘Bhishma replied, “Those who are wicked in their conduct cannot be disciplined. They are evil and foul in speech. The virtuous possess good conduct. That good conduct is their attribute. O Indra among kings! Those who follow dharma do not release urine or excrement on a royal road, amidst cattle, or in the midst of a cow pen. Virtuous people eat what is left after feeding the five.[1440] They do not talk while eating. They do not go to sleep with wet hands. A person who follows dharma circumambulates a fire, a bull, a god, a cow pen, a crossroads, a brahmana and a sanctuary. He yields the road to the aged, those who are bearing burdens, women, children, the afflicted, brahmanas, cattle and kings. He protects all the guests, servants, relatives and those who seek refuge, welcoming them. The gods have determined that men should eat in the morning and in the evening. A person should not eat in between and one who behaves in this way is regarded as one who fasts. A sacred fire waits for the time when libations will be poured into it. In that way, a woman waits for her season to come. A person who does not have intercourse with anyone else is said to follow brahmacharya. Amrita, brahmanas and cattle—these three are regarded as identical. Therefore, following the ordinances, one must always worship cows and brahmanas. There is no taint if one eats meat purified with hymns from the Yajur Veda. However, the meat from the backbone, pointless meat and the meat of one’s son are equal and must be shunned. Whether one is in one’s own country or whether one is in someone else’s country, one must not make guests fast. After one’s tasks[1441] have become successful, one must always give something to the preceptor. One must offer a seat to the preceptor. One must greet him and worship him. Through worshipping the preceptor, the lifespan, fame and prosperity are increased. One must not censure an aged person, or use him as a messenger. One should not be seated while such a person is standing. Then the lifespan will not be diminished. One must not look at a naked woman, or at such a learned man. Sexual intercourse and eating must always be done in secret. A preceptor is the greatest tirtha among tirthas. The heart is the most pure among all objects that are pure. Knowledge is the supreme kind of sight. Contentment is supreme happiness. Morning and evening, one must always listen to all the words spoken by the aged. A man always obtains learning by serving the aged. In studying and in eating, one must use the right hand. One must always control one’s speech and thoughts, so that the senses are not distracted. In a ceremony on the eighth lunar day, the ancestors, the gods and the aged must always be worshipped with properly cooked payasam, bits of barley, krisara and clarified butter. One must not shave without pronouncing benedictions. If one sneezes, one must have blessings pronounced on one’s own self. For a long lifespan, blessings must be pronounced on all those who are diseased. One must not use the word *tvam* for someone who is superior.[1442] Know that the learned are superior and using tvam for them is tantamount to slaying them. This word can be used for those who are inferior, equal or disciples. A person who is wicked in his heart always boasts about the wickedness he has committed. Even if a person willingly hides these sins from learned people, he is destroyed. Those who willingly commit wicked deeds often seek to hide them from the virtuous. ‘Men have not seen me. The gods have not seen me.’ However, struck by the wickedness of his sins, he is reborn as a wicked person. The sin increases like the interest on a loan and waits for his body to be destroyed. A sin can be destroyed through the practice of dharma and dharma can prevent sin from increasing. This is like salt dissolving, when water is poured over it. In that way, when there is atonement for a sin, it is immediately destroyed. Therefore, a sin must never be hidden. The act of hiding enhances it. Having done such a deed, one should recount it to the

virtuous, thereby pacifying it. Objects are stored with hope. If they are not enjoyed at the right time, when one is separated from one's body, they are enjoyed by someone else. The learned have said that dharma is in the minds of all creatures. That is the reason all creatures have an inclination to follow dharma. One should practise dharma alone. One should not raise aloft the flag of dharma, since those who practise dharma in this way are regarded as traders in dharma. Without any pride, one should worship the gods. Without any deceit, one should serve the preceptor. Gifts made quietly are the store of riches that sustain a person in the journey to the world hereafter."'

## Chapter 1830(149)

'Yudhishthira said, "If a person is unfortunate, even if he is strong, he does not obtain riches. However, if fortunate, even a weak person, or a child, obtains riches. When it is not the time for getting, even if one who makes exertions, one obtains nothing. And when it is the time for getting, even if one doesn't exert oneself, one obtains great riches. It can be seen that there are hundreds of men who make fruitless efforts. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! Had a mortal person been able to get all the fruits through exertions, why doesn't he get them? Why are men unable to get those? It is seen that a man makes efforts, but is unsuccessful, despite resorting to the path of making hundreds of attempts to acquire riches. However, another person doesn't resort to that path and is happy. Men who avoid perverse deeds are seen to be without riches. However, it is also seen that there are other people who resort to adharma and are rich. Even after studying all the sacred texts on good policy, one can be seen to be devoid of policy. An unaccomplished person is appointed as an adviser. What is the reason for this? There is an apparently learned person who is devoid of learning. A rich person faces hardships. If a man can obtain happiness by resorting to learning, a learned person should not be devoid of learning. Nor should he have to resort to an inferior person for subsistence. A man conquers thirst by resorting to water. If learning brought joy, then a man would not resort to ignorance. If one's time has not come, one does not die, even if one has been pierced by a hundred arrows. However, if the time has come, a person does not live, even if he is touched by the tip of a blade of grass."

'Bhishma replied, "In this world, if one has made attempts and does not obtain riches, one should resort to fierce austerities. Austerities lead to germination.[1443] One obtains objects of pleasure through donations. One becomes intelligent by serving the aged. One obtains a long life through non-violence. The learned ones have said this. Therefore, one must donate, not seek, and worship those who follow dharma. One must be pure and pleasant in speech and not show injury towards any creature. There is proof that power, happiness and unhappiness result from one's own nature, even among mosquitoes, insects and ants. O Yudhishthira! Therefore, be patient."'

## Chapter 1831(150)

‘Bhishma said, “If one performs virtuous deeds, or gets others to perform virtuous deeds, one obtains assurance because of those good deeds. However, the performer of wicked deeds does not obtain the assurance. In this world, it is time which afflicts creatures and also shows them its favours. It overwhelms the intelligence of creatures and drives them along dharma and artha. When a person’s intelligence shows him dharma and artha, he possesses dharma in his soul and obtains the assurance. His firmness of intelligence grants him that assurance. This alone is the sign of wisdom in creatures. A person who knows about both[1444] should look towards time and act accordingly. The men who possess this wealth are worshipped by other men. Those who know about dharma also honour these traits in their own selves. They never spend their time in polluting their practice of dharma with adharma. Therefore, they purify their souls so that they are reborn as those who practise dharma. They are like blazing fires and adharma is always incapable of touching them. Dharma is protected by time. Time acts so that dharma is victorious. In the three worlds, it is this that provides illumination. A man cannot seize an ignorant person and force him to act in accordance with dharma. Even if he practises dharma out of fear, he will resort to many kinds of deceit.”’

## Chapter 1832(151)

‘Yudhishthira asked, “What is best for a man? What should he do to obtain happiness? How can he be cleansed of his sins? How can he destroy his sins?”

‘Bhishma replied, “This is the lineage of the gods and this is the revered lineage of the rishis. O son! If one reads this during the two sandhyas, this is a supreme method to destroy all sins. The god who is the preceptor of the gods and the asuras, the one to whom all creatures bow down, the inconceivable one, the one who cannot be described, the life of all beings, the one who has not been born, the grandfather, the protector of the universe; Savitri, Brahma’s faithful wife; the origin of the Vedas, the creator Vishnu, the lord Narayana; Virupaksha, Uma’s consort; Skanda, the general; Vishakha, the devourer of oblations;[1445] Vayu; the radiant Chandra and Aditya; Shakra, the god who is Shachi’s consort; Yama, with Dhumorni;[1446] Varuna, with Gouri;[1447] the lord of riches, with Riddhi;[1448] the amiable cow, the goddess, Surabhi; the great rishi, Vishrava; the six seasons; the ocean; Ganga; other rivers; the diverse Maruts; the Valakhilyas, accomplished in austerities; Krishna Dvaipayana; Narada, Parvata; Vishvavasu, Haha, Huhu, Tumbaru, Chitrasena, the famous messengers of the gods; the immensely fortunate daughters of the gods; the large number of divine apsaras; Urvashi; Menaka; Rambha; Mishrakeshi; Alambusha; Vishvachi; Ghritachi; Panchachuda; Tilottama; the Adityas; the Vasus; the Rudras; the Ashvins; the ancestors; dharma; truth; austerities; initiation; resolution; the grandfather; night; day; Kashyapa, Marichi’s son; Shukra; Brihaspati; Bhouma;[1449] Budha; Rahu; Shanaishchara;[1450] the nakshatras; seasons; months; sandhyas; years; Vinata’s son;[1451] the oceans; Kadru’s sons, the serpents; Shatadru; Vipasha; Chandrabhaga; Sarasvati; Sindhu; Devika; Pushkara tirtha; Ganga; Mahanadi; Kapila; Narmada; Kampuna; Vishalya; Karatoya; Ambuvahini; Sarayu; Gandaki; the great river, Lohitya; Tamra; Aruna; Vetravati; Parnasha; Goutami; Godavari; Venna; Krishnavenna; Adrija; Dhrishadvati; Kaveri; Vamkshu; Mandakini; Prayaga; Prabhasa; the sacred Naimisha; Vishveshvara’s place, where the water in the lake is clear;[1452] the famous and

sacred tirtha of Kurukshetra, with many water bodies; the supreme Sindhu; austerities; gifts; Jambumarga; Hiranvati; Vitasta; the river Vekshumati; sacred parts of the earth, like Gangadvara; Rishikulya; Medhya; the river Chitrapatha; Koushiki; Yamuna; Sita; the river Charmanvati; the river Bhimarathi; the great river Bahuda; Mahendravani; Tridiva; Nilika; Sarasvati; Nanda; Aparananda; the tirtha of the great lake; Gaya; Phalgu-tirtha; Dharmaranya, surrounded by the gods; the sacred lake and river created by Brahma, auspicious and pure, capable of destroying all sins and famous in the three worlds; Mount Himalayas, full of divine herbs; Vindhyas, covered with many kinds of minerals, tirthas and herbs; Mount Meru; Malaya; Shveta, decorated with silver; Shringavat; Mandara; Nila; Nishadha; Dardura; Chitrakuta; Anjanabha; Mount Gandhamadana; the sacred Somagiri and many other large mountains; the directions; the sub-directions; the earth; all the large trees; the Vishvadevas; the firmament; the nakshatras; and the planets. Let the gods I have named, and those I have not named, always save us. A man who recites this is freed from all sins. A man who cheerfully chants this is freed from all fear. A man who, without criticizing, chants this praise is free from all sins associated with a mixture of the varnas. After the gods, I will recite the names of the brahmanas, stores of austerities, who have obtained success through austerities. The recital of their names frees from all sins—Yavakrita; Raibhya; Kakshivat; Oushija; Bhrigu; Angiras; Kanva; the lord Medhatithi; and Barhi, the possessor of qualities. All of these are based in the eastern direction. In the southern direction there are the immensely fortunate Ulmuchu; Pramuchu; the immensely fortunate Mumuchu; the valiant Svastyatreya; the powerful Agastya, the son of Mitra-Varuna; and Dridhayu and Urdhvabahu, the two famous and excellent rishis. Listen to the names of those who are in the western direction—Ushadgu; his valiant brother, Parivyadha; the rishi Dirghatama; Goutama; Kashyapa; the maharshis Ekata, Dvita and Trita; Atri's great-souled son; and the lord Sarasvata. Now hear about the ones who worship in the northern direction—Atri; Vasishtha; Shakti; Parashara's valiant son; Vishvamitra; Bharadvaja; Jamadagni; Richika's grandson, Rama; the rishi who is Uddaloka's son; Shvetaketu; Kohala; Vipula; Devala; Devasharma; Dhoumya; Hastikashyapa; Lomasha; Nachiketa; Lomaharshana; the rishi Ugrashrava; and Bhargava, Chyavana. These are enumerated as the names of the rishis who are revered by the gods. O king! If their names are recited first, one is freed from all sins. There are many rajarshis who are named—Nriga; Yayati; Nahusha; Yadu; the valiant Puru; Dhundhumara; Dilipa; the valiant Sagara; Krishashva; Yuvanashva; Chitrashva; Satyavat; Dushyanta; Bharata, the immensely famous emperor; Yavana; Janaka; King Dridaratha; Raghu, supreme among men; King Dasharatha; Rama, the destroyer of rakshasas; the brave Shashabindu; Bhagiratha; Harishchandra; Marutta; Jahnu, who was served by Jahnavi; Mahodaya; Alarka; King Aila; Karandhama, best among men; King Kadhmara; Daksha; Ambarisha; Kukura; the immensely illustrious Ravata; rajarshi Muchukunda; Chitrabhanu, the performer of agreeable deeds; King Trasadasyu; Shveta, supreme among rajarshis; the famous Mahabhisha; Nimi; King Ashtaka; Ayu; rajarshi Kshupa; King Kaksheyu; Shibi, Ushinara's son; King Gaya; Pratardana; Divodasa; Soudasa, the lord of Kosala; Ela; rajarshi Nala; Prajapati Manu; Havighna; Prishaghna; Pratipa; Shantanu; Kakshasena; and other rajarshis who have not been named. 'Let me not face obstructions. Let me not suffer from sin. Let there be no impediments along my path. Let my victory always be certain. After death, let me go to the supreme destination.'"'"'[1453]

# Chapter 1833(152)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Bhishma became silent then, like a picture that has been painted. Vyasa, Satyavati’s son, thought for a short while. He then spoke these words to the King Gangeya, who was lying down. “O king! With all his brothers and the kings who have followed him, Yudhishthira, the king of the Kurus, has been brought back to a state of normalcy. The tiger among men is worshipping you, together with the intelligent Krishna. You should now give him permission to return to the city.” Thus addressed by the illustrious Vyasa, the king who was the son of the river granted Yudhishthira, and his advisers, permission. The king who was Shantanu’s son spoke these sweet words. “O king! Enter the city and let your mental anxiety be dispelled. O Indra among kings! Placing self-control and devotion at the forefront, like Yayati, perform many kinds of sacrifices and give away large quantities of dakshina. O Partha! Remain engaged in the dharma of kshatriyas and satisfy the ancestors and the gods. With your mental anxiety dispelled, engage in what is beneficial. Delight all the subjects and let there be natural tranquility. As is proper, honour all the well-wishers with the fruits. O son! For their subsistence, let all the friends and well-wishers follow you, like the birds seek refuge in a tree that stands at a sacred spot and is laden with fruit. O king! Return here again, when it is time for me, when the sun retreats and begins to move towards uttarayana.” Having been thus addressed, Kounteya worshipped the grandfather. With his family, he left for the city of Nagasahvya. Placing Dhritarashtra and Gandhari, who was devoted to her husband, at the forefront, and with the rishis, all his brothers, Keshava, the inhabitants of the city and the countryside and the aged ministers, the king, foremost among the Kurus, entered the city of Varanasahvya.’

*This ends Dana Dharma Parva.*



# Section Eighty-Eight
# *Bhishma-Svargarohana Parva*

*This section has 84 shlokas and 2 chapters.*

*Chapter 1834(153): 50 shlokas*
*Chapter 1835(154): 34 shlokas*

Svarga *means heaven and* arohana *means ascent. Thus, this parva is about Bhishma's death and ascent to heaven.*

# Chapter 1834(153)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The king who was Kunti’s son honoured the inhabitants of the city and the countryside and gave them permission to leave for their own homes. The king who was Pandu’s son consoled the women who had lost their brave husbands and gave them a lot of riches. Having obtained his kingdom back, the immensely wise Yudhishthira was instated there. The best among men followed his own nature in everything. The supreme among the upholders of dharma obtained the benedictions of brahmanas, the foremost commanders of the army and the citizens. Having spent fifty nights in that supreme and beautiful city, the bull among men remembered that this was the period the foremost among Kouravas[1] had indicated. Surrounded by priests, he emerged from Gajasahvya.[2] He saw that the sun had retreated and was proceeding towards uttarayana. Before leaving, Kounteya Yudhishthira took clarified butter, garlands, fragrances, silken garments, sandalwood, the best of aloe and also black aloe, all required for preparing Bhishma. There were expensive garments and many kinds of jewels. The intelligent bull among men placed Dhritarashtra, the illustrious Gandhari, his mother, Pritha, and his brothers in front of him. Janardana and the intelligent Vidura followed, and so did Kouravya Yuyutsu and the lord Yuyudhana.[3] The king was surrounded by a large number of wagons with stores. O great king! Praises were sung. Fires were carried for kindling Bhishma. Like a king of the gods, he emerged from the city and arrived in Kurukshetra, to the king who was Shantanu’s son. O rajarshi! Parashara’s intelligent son, Vyasa, was worshipping him there and so were Narada and Asita-Devala. The remaining kings, who had not been killed, had assembled there from many countries. In every direction, the great-souled one was protected by the guards. The king saw that he was lying down on a bed meant for heroes. With his brothers, Dharmaraja descended from the chariot. Kounteya honoured his grandfather, the scorcher of enemies and Dvaipayana and the other brahmanas, who greeted them back. The undecaying one was with his brothers and with the officiating priests, who were like Brahma himself. They approached the bed of arrows, which was surrounded by the rishis.

‘O Kouravya! With his brothers, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira addressed the son of the river, the foremost among the Bharata lineage, who was lying down. “O king! O Jahnavi’s son! I am Yudhishthira and am bowing down before you. O mighty-armed one! If you can hear, tell me what I should do. O king! O lord! The time has come and I have brought the fire for you. The preceptors, the brahmanas, the officiating priests and my brothers are also here. Your son, the immensely energetic King Dhritarashtra, is also present, with his advisers and the valiant Vasudeva. O tiger among the Kuru lineage! All the kings from Kurujangala,[4] who have not been slain, are also here. Open your eyes and look at them. Everything that needs to be done now has been arranged by me. Since this is the time you had spoken about, everything has been arranged.” Thus addressed by Kunti’s intelligent son, Gangeya looked at all those of the Bharata lineage who were standing there, surrounding him. Though Bhishma was strong, he could not move. At that time, the eloquent one grasped his[5] strong hand and spoke in a voice that was as deep as a torrent of water or the roar of the clouds. “O Kounteya! O Yudhishthira! It is good fortune that you have come here with your advisers. The

illustrious sun, the one with the one thousand rays, is returning. Fifty-eight nights have passed since I have been lying down here, on these arrows that are sharp at the tip. It has been like one hundred years. O Yudhishthira! The sacred month of Magha[6] has arrived. One-fourth of shuklapaksha should still remain." Gangeya spoke in this way to Yudhishthira, Dharma's son. At that time, he also greeted Dhritarashtra and spoke these words. "O king! You know about dharma. Your doubts about artha have also been properly dispelled. You have served many brahmanas who are extremely learned. O lord of men! You know all the sacred texts of dharma associated with the Vedas, the four Vedas and all the Vedangas. O Kouravya! Since you know the truth about destiny, you should not grieve. From Krishna Dvaipayana, you have heard secret accounts connected with the gods. O king! Under dharma, the Pandavas are also your sons. They are always engaged in attending to their seniors. Remain established in dharma and protect them. Dharmaraja is pure in soul and always follows your instructions. I know that he is non-violent and is devoted to his seniors. Your sons were evil-souled and were addicted to anger and greed. Overcome with jealousy, they indulged in wicked conduct. You should not grieve over them." Having spoken these words to the learned Dhritarashtra, the mighty-armed Kourava addressed Vasudeva. "O illustrious one! O god of the gods! O one who is worshipped by the gods and the asuras! O Trivikrama![7] O wielder of the conch shell, chakra and the club! I bow down before you. O Krishna! O Vaikuntha! O Purushottama! Grant me permission. Protect the Pandaveyas. They are devoted to you. On an earlier occasion, I said this to the wicked and evil-minded Duryodhana. 'Wherever Krishna exists, dharma is there. Wherever dharma exists, victory is there. O son! Use Vasudeva as a tirtha and have peace with the Pandavas.' I repeatedly told him that the time had come for an alliance. However, that evil-minded and stupid one did not act in accordance with my words. Having destroyed the earth, he has himself been killed. O brave one! I know you as an ancient and supreme rishi. You spent a long period of time in Badari,[8] with the god Nara. Narada told me this and so did Vyasa, the great ascetic. They told me that Nara and Narayana have been born as men."[9] Vasudeva replied, "O Bhishma! O king! I grant you leave. May you become a Vasu.[10] O immensely radiant one! I have not seen the slightest bit of deceit in you. O rajarshi! In your devotion to your father, you were like another Markandeya.[11] Like a servant with a bowed head, death was under your control." Thus addressed, Gangeya again spoke to the Pandavas and to all his well-wishers, with Dhritarashtra as the foremost. "I wish to cast aside my breath of life. You should grant me leave. Strive to be truthful. Truth represents supreme strength. O descendant of the Bharata lineage![12] Always be with non-violent and excellent brahmanas, those who have controlled their souls, are devoted to dharma and always engage in austerities." Having said this, he embraced all his well-wishers. Yet again, the intelligent one spoke these words to Yudhishthira. "O lord of men! Brahmanas, especially wise ones, preceptors and officiating priests, should always be worshipped by you."'

## Chapter 1835(154)

Vaishampayana said, 'Bhishma, Shantanu's son, spoke these words to all the Kurus. O scorcher of enemies! Then, Kouravya remained silent for a while. In due order, he held himself in different

stages of *dharana*.[13] Having controlled his breath of life, the great-souled one propelled it upwards. In the midst of those great-souled ones, an extraordinary event occurred. As Shantanu's son released it along different parts of his body, because of being united with yoga, the wounds disappeared from those parts. While all of them looked on, in a short while, he was completely free of wounds. O king! With Vasudeva at the forefront, all of them were astounded on seeing this and that included all the sages, Vyasa and the others. He restrained his breath of life and controlled all the exits. Therefore, it pierced the crown of his head and ascended towards heaven. O lord of men! Like a giant meteor, it pierced Bhishma's head and emerged, penetrating the sky and instantly disappearing. O tiger among kings! Thus did the king who was Shantanu's son, the extender of the Bharata lineage, himself give up this world.

'The great-souled Pandavas and Vidura collected many diverse kinds of wood and fragrances and prepared the funeral pyre. Yuyutsu and the other Kouravas looked on. Yudhishthira and the extremely intelligent Vidura wrapped Gangeya Kourava's body in silken cloth and covered it with garlands. Over it, Yuyutsu held aloft an excellent umbrella. Bhimasena and Arjuna fanned it with whisks. The sons of Madri held the headdresses. Bhishma was the protector of the Kouravas and the extender of the Kuru lineage. On every side, the women stood around with fans made of palm leaves and fanned the body. The great-souled one's funeral ceremony[14] was performed according to the prescribed ordinances. Priests who knew the Sama Veda chanted Sama hymns. Sandalwood, yellow fragrant wood, black aloe and fragrances were used in the pyre. Gangeya was covered in these and the fire was lit. The kings, with Dhritarashtra at the forefront, stood on the right side of the pyre. Thus did the supreme ones of the Kuru lineage perform the funeral rites of Gangeya, foremost among the Kurus. With large numbers of rishis, the extenders of the Kuru lineage then went to the banks of the Bhagirathi. They were followed by Vyasa, Narada, Asita, Krishna, the women of the Bharata lineage and the assembled citizens. Following the prescribed rites, the best among the kshatriyas and all the people offered water to the great-souled Gangeya.

'When water was offered to her son, the goddess Bhagirathi herself arose from the water, weeping in grief. Lamenting, she addressed the Kouravas. "O unblemished ones! I will tell you what has happened. Listen. He was royal in conduct, with wisdom and a noble lineage. He honoured the elders among the Kurus, was devoted to his father and was firm in his vows. On an earlier occasion, Rama, Jamadagni's son, could not defeat him.[15] He possessed divine weapons and was immensely valorous. He has now been slain by Shikhandi. O kings! There is no doubt that the core of my heart is made out of stone. Though I can no longer see my beloved son, it has not yet been shattered. For the *svayamvara*, all the kings and the kshatriyas assembled in the city of Kashi.[16] On a single chariot, he defeated all of them and abducted the maidens. There never has been strength like his on earth. Yet, on hearing that he had been brought down by Shikhandi, my mind was not shattered. In Kurukshetra, the great-souled one fought with Jamadagni's son. Despite his being brought down by Shikhandi, I am not greatly afflicted." In this fashion, the great river lamented in many ways. The lord Damodara[17] comforted her. "O fortunate one! Control yourself. O one who is beautiful to see! You should not grieve. There is no doubt that your son has obtained supreme success. O beautiful one! He was one of the immensely energetic Vasus and was cursed. That is the reason he was born as a man. You should not sorrow. He followed the dharma of kshatriyas and fought in the field of battle. He was brought

down by Dhananjaya, not by Shikhandi. When Bhishma, tiger among the Kurus, was engaged in a great battle, no one was capable of bringing him down in that engagement, not even Shatakratu himself. O one with the beautiful face! Your son is at ease and has gone to heaven. O best among rivers! Therefore, you should not sorrow on account of that descendant of the Kuru lineage. O goddess! Be without anxiety. Your son has gone and has become one of the Vasus." In this way, the best among rivers was addressed by Krishna and by Vyasa. O great king! She abandoned her grief and controlled herself. All the kings, with Krishna at the forefront, honoured the river. Having taken her permission, all the kings then returned.'

*This concludes Bhishma-Svargarohana Parva and also concludes Anushasana Parva.*



# Section Eighty-Nine
# *Ashvamedhika Parva*

*This section has 2743 shlokas and 96 chapters.*


*Chapter 1836(1): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1837(2): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1838(3): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1839(4): 27 shlokas*
*Chapter 1840(5): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1841(6): 33 shlokas*
*Chapter 1842(7): 27 shlokas*
*Chapter 1843(8): 35 shlokas*
*Chapter 1844(9): 37 shlokas*
*Chapter 1845(10): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1846(11): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1847(12): 14 shlokas*
*Chapter 1848(13): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1849(14): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1850(15): 34 shlokas*
*Chapter 1851(16): 43 shlokas*
*Chapter 1852(17): 39 shlokas*
*Chapter 1853(18): 34 shlokas*
*Chapter 1854(19): 60 shlokas*
*Chapter 1855(20): 27 shlokas*
*Chapter 1856(21): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1857(22): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1858(23): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1859(24): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1860(25): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1861(26): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1862(27): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1863(28): 28 shlokas*
*Chapter 1864(29): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1865(30): 31 shlokas*
*Chapter 1866(31): 13 shlokas*
*Chapter 1867(32): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1868(33): 8 shlokas*
*Chapter 1869(34): 12 shlokas*
*Chapter 1870(35): 40 shlokas*

*Chapter 1871(36): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1872(37): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1873(38): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1874(39): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1875(40): 9 shlokas*
*Chapter 1876(41): 5 shlokas*
*Chapter 1877(42): 62 shlokas*
*Chapter 1878(43): 40 shlokas*
*Chapter 1879(44): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1880(45): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1881(46): 55 shlokas*
*Chapter 1882(47): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1883(48): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1884(49): 55 shlokas*
*Chapter 1885(50): 51 shlokas*
*Chapter 1886(51): 56 shlokas*
*Chapter 1887(52): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1888(53): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1889(54): 35 shlokas*
*Chapter 1890(55): 35 shlokas*
*Chapter 1891(56): 28 shlokas*
*Chapter 1892(57): 56 shlokas*
*Chapter 1893(58): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1894(59): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1895(60): 41 shlokas*
*Chapter 1896(61): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1897(62): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1898(63): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1899(64): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1900(65): 29 shlokas*
*Chapter 1901(66): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1902(67): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1903(68): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1904(69): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1905(70): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1906(71): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1907(72): 27 shlokas*
*Chapter 1908(73): 34 shlokas*
*Chapter 1909(74): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1910(75): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1911(76): 32 shlokas*

*Chapter 1912(77): 46 shlokas*
*Chapter 1913(78): 39 shlokas*
*Chapter 1914(79): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1915(80): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1916(81): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1917(82): 32 shlokas*
*Chapter 1918(83): 30 shlokas*
*Chapter 1919(84): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1920(85): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1921(86): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1922(87): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1923(88): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1924(89): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1925(90): 39 shlokas*
*Chapter 1926(91): 41 shlokas*
*Chapter 1927(92): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1928(93): 93 shlokas*
*Chapter 1929(94): 34 shlokas*
*Chapter 1930(95): 36 shlokas*
*Chapter 1931(96): 15 shlokas*

*Ashva means a horse and medha means a sacrifice. Thus, Ashvamedhika Parva or Ashvamedha Parva is about a horse sacrifice. In the 18-parva classification, Ashvamedhika Parva is the 14th. In the 100-parva classification, Ashvamedhika Parva is Section 89. In the numbering of the chapters in Ashvamedhika Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Ashvamedhika Parva. There is a recital of the Anu-Gita. Krishna leaves for Dvaraka and there is a discourse with Utanka on the way. Yudhishthira collects riches for the horse sacrifice, this section being named after that. Krishna returns to Hastinapura. Parikshit is born dead, but is revived by Krishna. As the horse travels around, Arjuna fights with the Trigartas, Vajradatta (Bhagadatta's son), the Saindhavas, Babhruvahana (his son through Chitrangada), Magadha, Shakuni's son and many others. Yudhishthira's horse sacrifice is held and there is the incident of the mongoose.*

## Chapter 1836(1)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Placing King Dhritarashtra at the forefront, the mighty-armed Yudhishthira offered water.[1] His senses were bewildered. His eyes overflowing with tears, the lord of the earth arose from the waters of the Ganga and fell down on the bank, like an elephant struck by a hunter. Instructed by Krishna, Bhima picked up the one who was sinking down. Krishna, the afflicter of enemy armies, said, “Do not act in this way.” O king! The Pandavas saw that Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul, was afflicted and had fallen down on the ground, sighing repeatedly. They saw that the lord of men was distressed in his mind and was almost lifeless. At this, the Pandavas were overwhelmed by grief again and sat down. The mighty-armed Dhritarashtra saw that the king was seated, afflicted by great grief. The immensely wise one spoke these words. “O tiger among Kurus! Arise. Do what must be done next. O Kouravya! You have conquered the earth through the dharma of kshatriyas. O lord of men! Enjoy the earth with your brothers and your well-wishers. O supreme among the upholders of dharma! I do not see any reason why you should grieve. O lord of the earth! It is I and Gandhari who should grieve. We have lost our sons and our kingdom, like wealth that is obtained in a dream. I did not listen to the words, full of grave import, of the great-souled Vidura, who desired our welfare. That is the reason I, an evil-minded person, am repenting. The one with divine sight and dharma in his soul had told me earlier, “Your lineage will be destroyed because of Duryodhana’s crimes. O king! If you desire welfare for yourself and for your lineage, kill the evil-souled one, the wicked King Suyodhana. Never let Karna and Shakuni meet him. Restrain them from their intoxication with this gambling match. Instate King Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul. He will follow dharma and control and rule the earth. O king! Or, if King Yudhishthira, Kunti’s son, does not desire the kingdom, be the focal point for the entire kingdom and accept it yourself. O lord of men! Look upon all creatures impartially. O extender of your kin! Let all your relatives earn a living.” O Kounteya! The far-sighted Vidura spoke to me in this way. But my intelligence was foolish and I followed the wicked Duryodhana. I did not listen to the brave one’s sweet words. Hence, I have obtained the fruits of this great grief and am immersed in this ocean of sorrow. O king! Behold. Your aged fathers[2] are miserable. O lord of men! However, I do not see any reason why you should be grieving.’

## Chapter 1837(2)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Thus addressed by the intelligent Dhritarashtra, the intelligent king was silent and Keshava spoke to him. “O lord of men! If a man has excessive grief in his mind about the death of his forefathers, he has nothing but torment. You should now perform many kinds of sacrifices, with large quantities of dakshina, satisfying the gods with soma and the ancestors with svadha. O immensely wise one! You should not act in this way. You know what is to be known. Act in accordance with that. You have heard about the dharma of kings from Bhishma, Bhagirathi’s son,

Krishna Dvaipayana, Narada and Vidura. You should not follow the conduct of the foolish. O one who bears the burden of the lineage! You should follow the conduct that was resorted to by your forefathers. There is no doubt that a kshatriya should obtain heaven through his fame. A brave person is never slain when he has turned his back on a battle. O great king! Therefore, abandon your grief. This is nothing but destiny. You will not be able to see those who have been slain in this battle again." Govinda spoke in this way to Dharmaraja Yudhishthira. When the immensely energetic one paused, Yudhishthira replied. "O Govinda! I know the affection you bear towards me. You have loved me, wished me well and always shown me your compassion. O one with the chakra and the club! Do what will bring me great pleasure now. O handsome one! O descendant of the Yadava lineage! In every way, my mind will then be happy. O illustrious one! Grant me permission to go to a hermitage. After having killed the grandfather, I cannot find any peace. There is also Karna, tiger among men, who never retreated from an encounter. O scorcher of enemies! I will then be able to free myself from the cruel deed. Through such an act, I will be able to purify my mind." While he was speaking, Vyasa, who knew about dharma, spoke to him. The immensely energetic one comforted him through these auspicious words. "O son! Your intelligence is still not refined. You are again confused, like a child. Why are all of us repeatedly casting our words towards the sky?[3] You know about the dharma of kshatriyas. Fighting is their livelihood. A king must follow that conduct, without being tied down by bonds of affection. You have heard the entire truth about moksha dharma. I have severed your unaccomplished doubts that resulted from desire. However, intelligence is extremely difficult for those who have no faith. It is certain that you have forgotten everything. You should not act in this way. You should not be so ignorant. O unblemished one! You know about all the rites of atonement. You have heard everything about the dharma of fighting and the dharma of giving. You know about all kinds of dharma and are accomplished in all the sacred texts. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Yet, you are confused again, as if you are ignorant."'

## Chapter 1838(3)

'Vyasa said, "O Yudhishthira! It is my view that your wisdom is still not complete. No mortal person does anything himself, there is no action that is under his own control. A man is engaged by God and performs good and bad deeds. Since it is Purusha who does the acts, where is the scope for repentance? You think that you have yourself performed those wicked deeds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Listen to the means whereby these wicked deeds can be countered. O Yudhishthira! A wicked deed perpetrated by a man can always be overcome through austerities, sacrifices and donations. O lord of men! O tiger among kings! Sacrifices, austerities and donations purify a man from his wicked deeds. To become sacred, the asuras and the gods performed rites. Those great-souled ones sought to perform sacrifices. It is through sacrifices that the great-souled gods became even more powerful. Thus, after performing rites, the gods assailed the danavas. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O king! O Yudhishthira! Prepare for rajasuya, ashvamedha, *sarvamedha* and naramedha.[4] Perform *vajimedha* and give away dakshina in the proper way, distributing many desired riches, just as Rama, Dasharatha's son, did. King Marutta did that too and so did the immensely

valorous king who was the son of Dushyanta and Shakuntala,[5] your ancestor."

'Yudhishthira replied, "There is no doubt that vajimedha purifies the earth. However, I have an intention that you should hear about.

O supreme among brahmanas! I have caused this extremely great slaughter of the kin. I am incapable of giving away even limited riches.

I have no wealth left. I am not interested in asking these children for riches.[6] The princes alone are left and I am responsible for their wounds and their hardships. O supreme among brahmanas! I have myself destroyed the earth and they are overcome with grief. For the sake of performing a sacrifice, how can I impose a levy on them? The earth and the kings were destroyed because of Duryodhana's crimes. O supreme among sages! But in the process, we have been united with ill-repute. For the sake of riches, Duryodhana destroyed the earth. The treasury has been exhausted because of Dhritarashtra's evilminded son. In the first place, the earth was thought of as dakshina. In the case of adverse fortune, the learned and the virtuous have thought of an exception.[7] O one who is rich in austerities! However, I do not desire to have such a proxy. O illustrious one! In this connection, you should advise me about what should be done."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Krishna Dvaipayana was thus addressed by Partha. He thought for a while and then spoke to Dharmaraja. "O Partha! There are riches in the Himalaya mountains. At King Marutta's sacrifice, the brahmanas left them there.[8] O Kounteya! If you bring that, it will be enough." Yudhishthira asked, "What was Marutta's sacrifice and what riches were distributed there? O supreme among eloquent ones! What was the era of that king?" Vyasa replied, "O Partha! If you wish to, hear about that king from the Karandhama lineage. I will tell you about that immensely valorous king and his era and his great riches."'

## Chapter 1839(4)

'Yudhishthira said, "O one who knows about dharma! I wish to hear the story of that rajarshi. O Dvaipayana! O unblemished one! Tell me about Marutta's account."

'Vyasa replied, "Earlier, in *krita* yuga, there was the lord Manu, the wielder of the staff. His son was the great archer, famous as Prajati. Prajati had a famous son named Kshupa. Kshupa's son was the lord, King Ikshvaku. O king! He had one hundred sons and they were supremely devoted to dharma. The lord Ikshvaku made all of them kings. The eldest, Vimsha, was unmatched as an archer. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Vimsha had a fortunate son named Vivimsha. O king! Vivimsha had fifteen sons. All of them were brave archers, devoted to brahmanas and truthful in speech. They were virtuous and devoted to the dharma of giving. They were always agreeable in speech. The eldest one was Khaninetra and he oppressed all the other brothers. The valiant Khaninetra conquered the kingdom and removed all its sons.[9] However, he was incapable of protecting the kingdom and the subjects weren't happy. They took away the kingdom from him and gave it to his son, Suvarcha. O Indra among kings! They instated him and were delighted. He[10] saw the action taken against his father and the fact that he had been banished from the kingdom. Therefore, he was devoted to the law and engaged in the welfare of the subjects. He was devoted to brahmanas. He was truthful in speech and

pure. He was tranquil and self-restrained. Since the learned one was always devoted to dharma, the subjects found joy in him. Because of his devotion to dharma, the treasury and vehicles became exhausted.[11] When the treasury was exhausted, the vassals oppressed him from all directions. With his treasury and vehicles diminished, he was afflicted by many. The king, the servants and the city faced supreme suffering and hardships. O Yudhishthira! The king was always completely devoted to dharma. However, since his strength was diminished, he was incapable of offering protection. When the king and the city faced the ultimate in hardships, he blew violently into his hand and from this, soldiers emerged. The soldiers generated in this way defeated all the kings along the boundaries. O king! It is because of this reason that he became famous as Karandhama.[12] Karandhama's son was born at the beginning of *treta* yuga. He was supreme and handsome and like Indra. Like the gods, he was extremely difficult to defeat. All the kings were always under his subjugation. Because of his conduct and his strength, he became the emperor of all creatures. His name was Avikshit and he possessed dharma in his soul. He was Indra's equal in valour. He was devoted to sacrifices and addicted to rites. He possessed fortitude and was in control of his senses. He was Aditya's equal in energy and the earth's equal in forgiveness. He was Brihaspati's equal in intelligence and like the Himalayas in steadfastness. The king sustained the minds of the subjects through his deeds, thoughts, words, self-control and tranquility. Following the rites, the lord performed hundreds of horse sacrifices. The learned lord Angiras himself was the officiating priest at these sacrifices. His son surpassed the father in qualities. His name was Marutta and he was knowledgable about dharma. He was an immensely illustrious emperor. His strength was equal to that of ten thousand elephants. He was like a second Vishnu. Wishing to perform a sacrifice, the one with dharma in his soul accumulated a lot of molten gold. He had thousands of sparkling vessels constructed. He went to Mount Meru, to the north of the Himalayan slopes. He performed the rites on the great golden slopes there. He had golden bowls, vessels, pans and seats constructed and they were innumerable. The sacrificial area was arranged near that spot. Following the ordinances, the king, with dharma in his soul, performed the sacrifice there. All the other kings were also with King Marutta."'

## Chapter 1840(5)

'Yudhishthira asked, "O supreme among eloquent ones! How did the king become so valorous? O brahmana! How did he accumulate so much gold? O illustrious one! Where are all those objects now? O one who is a store of austerities! How can we get them now?"

'Vyasa replied, "O son! Daksha Prajapati had several offspring—asuras and gods and they challenged each other. Angiras had two sons who were equal in their vows—Brihaspati, great in energy, and Samvarta, a store of austerities. O king! They rivalled each other and went their separate ways. Brihaspati repeatedly obstructed Samvarta. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Always obstructed by his elder brother, he gave up his riches, went around naked and evinced a desire to live in the woods. At that time, Vasava defeated and killed all the asuras. Having obtained the title of Indra of the worlds, he appointed the eldest son of Angiras, Brihaspati, best among brahmanas, as his priest. Earlier, Angiras was King Karandhama's priest. In valour, conduct and strength, he[13] was unmatched

in the worlds. He had dharma in his soul and was rigid in his vows. He was as energetic as Shatakratu. He possessed many kinds of mounts, warriors and objects. O king! Through his meditations, all of these would be generated from his mouth. Through these qualities, the king brought all the kings under his subjugation. After having lived for as long as he wished, he went to heaven in his physical body. He had a son who was as knowledgable about dharma as Yayati. O afflicter of enemies! His name was Avikshit and he brought the earth under his subjugation. In valour and qualities, this king was like his father. He had a valiant son named Marutta, who was Vasava's equal. The earth, up to the girdle of the ocean, was devoted to him. O descendant of the Pandu lineage! The king always challenged the king of the gods and Vasava also challenged Marutta. King Marutta was pure and possessed qualities. Despite trying, Shakra wasn't able to get the better of him. So that he might surpass him, Harivahana[14] summoned Brihaspati and, together with the other gods, spoke these words to him. 'O Brihaspati! Marutta never does anything that I find agreeable. O Brihaspati! I have obtained the title of Indra in the three worlds and over the gods. Yet, in rites for the gods and in rites for the ancestors, Marutta does what is disagreeable to me. O brahmana! You are the officiating priest of the king of the gods. How can you be the officiating priest for a mortal? Without the least bit of doubt, you have become the officiating priest of King Marutta, who is a mere mortal. O fortunate one! You will have to choose me or King Marutta. Give up Marutta and come over to my side.' O Kouravya! The king of the gods spoke in this way. Having thought for a while, Brihaspati replied to the king of the gods. 'You are the lord of creatures. The worlds are established in you. You are the slayer of Namuchi, Vishvarupa and Bala. O brave one! You have single-handedly obtained supreme prosperity for the gods. O slayer of Bala! You are the one who always holds up earth and heaven. O lord of a large number of gods! O chastiser of Paka! After having acted as an officiating priest for you, how can I be the officiating priest for a mortal like Marutta? O lord of the gods! I will stay with you and never with a mortal. I am accepting the ladle for the sacrifice. Listen to my words. If I deviate from this truth, may the one with the golden seed[15] turn cold, may the earth begin to move and may the sun cease to radiate heat.' On hearing Brihaspati's words, Shakra lost all sense of jealousy. Having praised him, he entered his own abode."'

## Chapter 1841(6)

'Vyasa said, "O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between Brihaspati and Marutta. On hearing about the agreement made between the son of Angiras[16] and the king of the gods, King Marutta was enraged. Karandhama's grandson made up his mind to organize a sacrifice and made the arrangements. The eloquent one went to Brihaspati and spoke these words. 'O illustrious one! O store of austerities! O preceptor! When I came to you earlier, you asked me to perform a sacrifice. I have made up my mind to do this now and have collected all the ingredients. O virtuous one! I wish to make you the officiating priest. Therefore, accept these and perform the rites.' Brihaspati replied, 'O lord of the earth! I do not wish to be your officiating priest. I have been engaged by the king of the gods and have given him an undertaking.' Marutta said, 'You have been the priest for my ancestors and I revere you

greatly. I have obtained you as an officiating priest. Since I am devoted to you, you should also be devoted to me.' Brihaspati replied, 'Having been an officiating priest for immortals, I can't be an officiating priest for humans. O Marutta! Whether you stay or whether you go, I have now withdrawn from being your officiating priest. Since I will not be your officiating priest, choose whomever you want. O mighty-armed one! Find a priest who will perform the sacrifice for you.'

'"Having been thus addressed, King Marutta was ashamed. He was anxious. While he was returning, he met Narada along the road. The king met devarshi Narada. In the proper way, he joined his hands in salutation and stood there. Narada asked, 'O rajarshi! O unblemished one! You do not seem to be happy. Is everything well with you? Where had you gone? Which is the place where you experienced such cheerlessness? O king! O bull among kings! If I can hear about it, tell me. O lord of men! I will make every attempt to dispel your rage.' Marutta was thus addressed by maharshi Narada and told him everything about how he had been rebuffed by his preceptor. 'I went to Brihaspati, the preceptor of the gods and the son of Angiras. I met him to request him to be the officiating priest at my sacrifice. However, he did not give me reason for joy and rebuffed me. I no longer desire to remain alive now. O Narada! Having been abandoned by my preceptor, I am tainted.' O great king! Having been thus addressed by the king, Narada replied in words that brought life into Avikshit's son. 'O king! Angiras has a son named Samvarta and he is devoted to dharma. He is confusing all creatures and is wandering around in all the directions, naked. If Brihaspati does not wish to be your officiating priest, go to him. O great king! If Samvarta is pleased with you, he will be your officiating priest.' Marutta said, 'O Narada! I have been revived by your words. O supreme among eloquent ones! Tell me where I can see Samvarta. How can I ensure that he remains with me and how can I ensure that he doesn't abandon me? If he also refuses me, I will not be interested in remaining alive.' Narada replied, 'He sports the attire of a mad man and has all those signs. He has resorted to a life of begging in the city of Varanasi. O lord of the earth! Approach its gates and place a corpse there. If you see someone repelled by this, he will be Samvarta. Follow him from the rear and go wherever that valiant one goes. Approach him, join your hands in salutation and seek refuge with him. O slayer of enemies! If he seems to be pained and asks you who told you about him, tell him it was Narada. He may ask you to follow me and seek to persuade me. In that case, without any hesitation, tell him I have entered the fire.' The rajarshi agreed to this and honoured Narada. Having taken his permission, he went to the city of Varanasi.

'"Having gone there, the immensely illustrious one remembered Narada's words. He placed a corpse in front of the gate. Through a coincidence, the brahmana entered the gate at the same time. On seeing the corpse, he suddenly retreated. On seeing this, the king who was Avikshit's son joined his hands in salutation and followed him from the rear, desiring to be instructed by Samvarta. When he[17] saw the king in that desolate spot, he covered him with dirt, mud, spittle and excrement. The king was thus made to suffer by Samvarta. However, he joined his hands in salutation and entreated the rishi, seeking his favours. Eventually, Samvarta desisted. He was exhausted. He sought out the cool shade of a banyan tree with many branches and sat down there."'

## Chapter 1842(7)

‘“Samvarta said, ‘How did you get to know about me? Who told you about me? If you desire that I should do something agreeable for you, tell me the truth about this. If you speak the truth, you will obtain everything that you desire. If you utter a lie, your head will be shattered into seven fragments.’

‘“Marutta replied, ‘Along the road, Narada told me about you. He said that you are the son of our preceptor[18] and will give me great delight.’

‘“Samvarta said, ‘You have told me the truth. He knows me as an officiating priest. Now tell me, where is Narada?’

‘“Marutta replied, ‘The excellent devarshi told me about you. Having done that, he took my leave and entered the fire.’”

‘Vyasa said, “On hearing the king’s words, Samvarta was greatly delighted. He said, ‘I am also capable of doing that.’ O king! The brahmana repeatedly seemed to censure Marutta through these crazy and harsh words. ‘I suffer from disease of the wind.[19] I am capricious and wilful. Why do you want such an abnormal person to be your officiating priest? My brother is capable and has been honoured by Vasava. He is engaged in performing sacrifices. Get your rites done by him. He has taken away my house and all my rights as an officiating priest. He has taken away all my gods. My elder brother has taken all these away and has only left me with this body. O Avikshit’s son! Without his permission, I can never act as an officiating priest. How can I? He deserves my worship. Therefore, go to Brihaspati. Obtain his permission and then return to me. If you desire to engage me as an officiating priest at your sacrifice, this is what you must do.’

‘“Marutta replied, ‘O Samvarta! Listen to me. I went to Brihaspati earlier. Restrained by Vasava, he did not desire to be my officiating priest. “O rishi! You are an officiating priest for the immortals now and cannot be one for humans. You cannot be an officiating priest for Marutta, who suffers from having to follow the dharma of mortals. O brahmana! That king always seeks to rival me.” This is what your brother was told by the slayer of Bala and Vritra and he agreed. O bull among sages! I affectionately went to him and sought him as an officiating priest. But having resorted to the king of the gods, he did not accept my request. I wish to surpass Vasava in all the qualities. Therefore, I will expend all my riches in a sacrifice, with you as the officiating priest. O brahmana! Since I went to Brihaspati and have been rebuffed by him, I no longer have the inclination to go back to him.’

‘“Samvarta said, ‘O king! I will certainly do everything that you desire, but only if you do everything that I intend. However, when Brihaspati and Purandara know that I am the officiating priest, they will be angry and seek to cause injury. They have the capacity. Therefore, you must assure me that you will be steadfast. If I am enraged with you, I will reduce you and your relatives to ashes.’

‘“Marutta replied, ‘If I abandon the association with you, may I not obtain the worlds for as long as the one with the one thousand rays radiates heat, or as long as the mountains exist. If I abandon the association with you, may I never obtain proper intelligence and may I always be immersed in the improper ignorance of material possessions.’

‘“Samvarta said, ‘O Avikshit’s son! Your intelligence is pure and I will undertake the act. O king! I will be your officiating priest. O king! I will plan it so that your excellent riches are inexhaustible and superior to those of the gods and the gandharvas, together with Shakra. My mind does not turn towards the sacrifice for the sake of riches. However, I wish to do what is disagreeable to both my

brother and Indra. It is certain that I will make you Indra's equal. I will do what is agreeable to you. I am telling you this truthfully.'"'

## Chapter 1843(8)

"'Samvarta continued, 'There is a summit named Munjavat on the slopes of the Himalaya mountains. The illustrious one, Uma's consort,[20] is always engaged in tormenting himself through austerities there. As he desires and as he pleases, he does this under trees, slopes, summits and caves of that king of mountains. With Uma as his companion, the illustrious Maheshvara is always there. The immensely energetic one has a trident and is surrounded by large numbers of different kinds of demons.[21] The Rudras, the Sadhyas, the Vishvadevas, the Vasus, Yama, Varuna, Kubera and his followers, bhutas, pishachas, the Nasatya Ashvins,[22] the gandharvas, the apsaras, the yakshas, the devarshis, the Adityas, the Maruts and all the yatudhanas are also there, worshipping Uma's great-souled consort in his many different forms. O lord of the earth! The illustrious one finds pleasure there, sporting with Kubera's malformed and deformed companions. His blazing prosperity is seen to be as radiant as the morning sun. However, that region is never seen to have any particular form. No ordinary creature, made out of flesh, can see it with his eyes. It is neither hot, nor cold, there. There is no wind. Nor is the sun there. O king! There is no old age, hunger, thirst, death or fear. O supreme among victorious ones! Shining like the rays of the sun, there are minerals and gold along all the slopes of that mountain. O king! With their weapons raised, Kubera's companions protect the spot. They wish to do what brings pleasure to the great-souled Kubera. O king! Go there and bow down before the illustrious one—Sharva, Vedha, Rudra, Shitikantha, Surupa, Suvarcha, Kapardi, Karala, Haryakshana, Varada, Tryakshana, Pushna, Dantabhida, Vamana, Shiva, Yama, Avyakta-kesha, Sadvritta, Shankara, Kshemya, Harinetra, Sthanu, Purusha, Harikesha, Munda, Kusha, Uttarana, Bhaskara, Sutirtha, Devadeva, Ramha, Ushnishi, Suvaktra, Sahasraksha, Midusha, Girisha, Prashanta, Yati, Chiravasa, Bilvadanda, Siddha, Sarva-dandadhara, Mriga-vyadha, Mahat, Dhanvina, Bhava, Vara, Soumya-vaktra, Pashuhasta, Varshina, Hiranyabahu, Ugra, Dikpati, Pashupati, Bhutapati, Vrisha, Matri-bhakta, Sena, Madhyama, Sruva-hasta, Dhanvipati, Bhargava, Aja, Krishna-netra, Virupaksha, Tikshna-damshtra, Tikshna, Vaishvanara-mukha, Mahadyuti, Ananga, Sarvanga, Prajavat, Shukradhipati, Prithivi, Krittivasa, Kapalamali, Nitya, Suvarna-mukuta, Mahadeva, Krishna, Tryambaka, Anagha, Krodhana, Nrishamsa, Mridu, Bahushali, Dandi, Tapta-tapasa, Krura-karma, Sahasra-shira, Sahasracharana, Svadha-svarupa, Bahurupa, Damshtri, Pinaki, Mahayogi, Avyaya, Trishula-pani, Bhuvaneshvara, Tripuraghna, Trinayana, Trilokesha, Mahoujasa, Prabhava-sarvabhutanam, Dharna, Dharanidhara, Ishana, Sarva, Shiva, Vishveshara, Umapati, Vishvarupa, Dashabhuja, Tishya, Go-vrisha-dhvaja, Ghora, Gouri-shamishvara, Shukra, Prithu, Prithuhara, Hara, Bahurupa, Pranamya-shirasa-deva, Ananga-anga-hara, Sharanya, Sharana, Chaturmukha.[23] Go and seek refuge with Mahadeva. Having done this, bow down before the powerful Mahadeva. O lord of the earth! You will obtain gold from that great-souled one. Men who go there obtain gold.'"

'Vyasa continued, "Thus addressed, Karandhama's son acted in accordance with these words. After this, he made superhuman arrangements for the sacrifice. Artisans manufactured golden vessels. On

hearing about King Marutta's prosperity, which surpassed that of the gods, Brihaspati was severely tormented. He was tormented and became pale. His body became emaciated. 'Samvarta, my enemy, will also become prosperous.' The king of the gods heard that Brihaspati was severely tormented. Surrounded by the immortals, he went there and spoke these words."'

## Chapter 1844(9)

"'Indra asked, 'O Brihaspati! Are you sleeping happily? Are your attendants doing what brings you pleasure? O brahmana! Do you desire the happiness of the gods? Are the gods protecting you?'

'"Brihaspati replied, 'O great Indra! I sleep happily in my bed. My attendants do what brings me pleasure. O Shakra! I desire the happiness of the gods. The gods protect me extremely well.'

'"Indra asked, 'What is the reason for your mental or physical grief? Why are you pale and faded now? O brahmana! Tell me about all those who have caused you misery, so that I can kill them.'

'"Brihaspati replied, 'O Maghavan! I am restless because Marutta will perform a great sacrifice, at which, excellent dakshina will be offered. I have heard that Samvarta will be the officiating priest. However, I desire that he should not be the officiating priest.'

'"Indra said, 'O brahmana! O one who knows about mantras! Having become the foremost priest of the gods, you have obtained all the objects of desire. O brahmana! You have transcended birth and death. What can Samvarta do to you now?'

'"Brihaspati replied, 'Whenever one sees signs of prosperity in a rival, one is miserable. That is the reason, with the gods, you attack and kill the asuras and their relatives. O Indra of the gods! Listen. I am pale in complexion at the prosperity of my rival. O Maghavan! Use every means to restrain Samvarta and King Marutta.'

'"Indra said, 'O Jataveda![24] Come here. I am asking you to go to Marutta and render Brihaspati to him. Tell him that Brihaspati will be his officiating priest and make him like one who is immortal.'

'"Agni replied, 'O Shakra! I will go there as your messenger and offer Brihaspati to Marutta. In this way, I will make Puruhuta's words come true and will do what brings pleasure to Brihaspati.'"

'Vyasa continued, "The great-souled one, with the smoke on his standard, departed as he wished. He whirled and roared, like the wind shattering the wood at the end of the winter, breaking down forests, trees and plants.

'"Marutta said, 'I see something extraordinary. The fire god has arrived in his personified form. O sage![25] Offer him a seat, water for washing the feet, a cow and water for drinking.'

'"Agni replied, 'O unblemished one! I am happy to accept the seat, water and water for washing the feet. Know that I have come here as a messenger instructed by Indra.'

'"Marutta asked, 'O one with the smoke on the standard! Is the intelligent king of the gods happy? Is he pleased with us? Are the other gods under his subjugation? O god! Accurately, tell me everything.'

'"Agni replied, 'O Indra among kings! Shakra is extremely happy. He is pleased with you and wishes to free you from old age. O king! All the other gods are under his subjugation. Hear the

message of the king of the gods. He has sent me here so that Brihaspati can be handed over to Marutta. O king! Let him be the preceptor and the officiating priest for your sacrifice. You are mortal. But he will make you immortal.'

'"Marutta said, 'This brahmana, Samvarta, will be my officiating priest. I join my hands in salutation before Brihaspati.[26] He has been the officiating priest for a god, the great Indra. It is not appropriate that the virtuous one should now be an officiating priest for someone who is mortal.'

'"Agni replied, 'If Brihaspati is your officiating priest, through the favours of the king of the gods, you will obtain the worlds and greatness in the world of the gods. It is certain that you will conquer heaven and obtain fame. O Indra among men! If Brihaspati is your officiating priest, you will now win all the human and celestial worlds and the great worlds of Prajapati and you will also conquer the entire kingdom of heaven.'

'"Samvarta said, 'You must never again come here to offer Brihaspati to Marutta. O Pavaka![27] Listen to me. If you do so, I will be enraged and will burn you down with my terrible sight.'"

'Vyasa continued, "The one with the smoke on his standard was terrified at the prospect of being burnt down. He trembled like the leaves of a fig tree. He went back to the gods. The great-souled Shakra saw that the fire god was in Brihaspati's company and asked, 'O Jataveda! Did you go and offer Brihaspati to Marutta? What did the king who wishes to perform a sacrifice say? How did he receive your words?'

'"Agni replied, 'Marutta did not find your words appealing. He joined his hands in salutation before Brihaspati and said, "This Samvarta will be my officiating priest." He repeatedly glanced towards me and spoke these words. He said he was not interested in obtaining the worlds of men or gods or the great worlds of Prajapati. He had no such desire.'

'"Indra said, 'Go and meet the king again. Tell him these words of mine. They are for his own good. If he still does not act in accordance with my words, I will strike him down with the vajra.'

'"Agni replied, 'Let the king of the gandharvas go there as your messenger. O Vasava! I am frightened of going there. Samvarta has observed brahmacharya. He was angry. He cast a wrathful and fierce glance at me and said, "If you come here again, to hand over Brihaspati to Marutta, I will burn you down with my fierce sight." O Shakra! Full of great rage, this is what he told me.'

'"Indra said, 'O Jataveda! You are the one who burns things down. There is no one else who can reduce anything to ashes. All the worlds are terrified of touching you. O bearer of oblations! What you have said cannot be believed.'

'"Agni replied, 'O Indra of the gods! O Shakra! Through your own strength, you have enveloped everything on earth and in heaven. That being the case, how was Vritra able to seize the three worlds?'

'"Indra said, 'When I am angered, I can crush all immobile objects into fragments. O Vahni! However, I do not drink soma offered by an enemy. I do not release the vajra at someone who is weak.[28] But how can a man who strikes me be happy? I have banished the *kalakeyas*[29] to earth and have flung down the danavas from the firmament. I brought to an end Prahlada's residence in heaven. How can a mortal strike me and remain happy?'

'"Agni replied, 'Chyavana officiated at Sharyati's sacrifice. With the Ashvins, he accepted the soma alone.[30] O great Indra! Do you remember that earlier occasion? You were enraged and tried to

prevent Sharyati's sacrifice. O Purandara! You struck rishi Chyavana with the extremely terrible vajra. That brahmana was overcome with rage. Through the powers of his austerities, he seized your arm, with the vajra. In his anger, he created an enemy who was terrible in form in every way. This was the asura named Mada and the universe was his form. On seeing him, you closed your eyes in fear. One of the jaws of that great danava was on earth and the other extended up to heaven. He had one thousand teeth that extended for one hundred yojanas. These were extremely sharp and terrible in form. There were four teeth that extended for two hundred yojanas. These were round and gigantic, with complexions like silver pillars. He gnashed those teeth and pursued you, wishing to slay you with an upraised and fierce spear. On seeing that terrible form, all the others looked on at a spectacle that had never been seen before. O slayer of danavas! At that time, you were terrified. You joined your hands in salutation and sought refuge with the maharshi. The strength of brahmanas is superior to the strength of kshatriyas. There is nothing that is superior to a brahmana. I know the truth about the energy of brahmanas. O Shakra! Therefore, I do not desire to go before Samvarta.'"'

## Chapter 1845(10)

"'Indra answered, 'Indeed, the strength of brahmanas is superior in this way. There is nothing that is superior to a brahmana. But I cannot tolerate the strength of Avikshit's son. I will strike him with the terrible vajra. O Dhritarashtra![31] Go to Marutta and tell him and Samvarta, "O king! Accept Brihaspati as your preceptor. Otherwise, I will strike you with the terrible vajra."'"

'Vyasa continued, "Dhritarashtra went to that Indra among men and told him about Vasava's words. 'O Indra among kings! Know me to be the gandharva Dhritarashtra. Desiring to say something, I have come here. O lion among kings! Listen to me. I will convey Indra's words. This is what the great-souled lord of the worlds said. "Choose Brihaspati as your officiating priest. Otherwise, I will strike you with the terrible vajra. Act in accordance with my words." This is what the one with the incomprehensible deeds has said.'

'"Marutta replied, 'You, Purandara, the Vishvadevas, the Vasus and the Ashvins know the truth about this. In this world, it has always been said that there is never any escape for someone who acts injuriously towards a friend. Let Brihaspati be the officiating priest for the great Indra, who is the excellent wielder of the vajra and the foremost among the gods. O king![32] Samvarta will be my officiating priest now. I do not find any pleasure in your words or in his.'[33]

'"The gandharva said, 'O lion among kings! You can hear Vasava's terrible roar. He is roaring in the firmament. It is evident that the great Indra will release his vajra. O king! At this time, think of what is good for you.'"

'Vyasa continued, 'He was thus addressed by King Dhritarashtra and heard Vasava's roar. Samvarta was supreme among those who knew about dharma and was always devoted to austerities. He told him everything and asked him about what should be done.

'"Marutta said, 'It is showering down, with thunderbolts. Though he cannot be seen yet, the immortal cannot be far. O Indra among brahmanas! For the sake of peace, I am seeking refuge with you. O foremost among brahmanas! Grant me freedom from fear. The wielder of the vajra is

advancing from the ten directions. He is superhuman and terrible. Our assisting priests have become frightened.'

'"Samvarta replied, 'O lion among kings! I will pronounce mantras and remove this extremely terrible fear that comes from Shakra. I will quickly stupefy him with my learning. It will soon be evident that you have nothing to fear. O king! I will stupefy him. Do not be frightened of Shakra. Let all the gods hurl their weapons towards me. Let the vajra blaze in all the directions. Let the wind blow. Let showers pour down and bring down forests. Let a flood rain down from heaven. Let the lightning be seen. Do not be terrified. All of this will be futile. Let Vasava shower down as much as he wants. Vahni will protect you in every way. Let him fling his vajra wherever he wants, let him make the wind blow. Let torrents of water flow in a terrible deluge.'

'"Marutta said, 'The terrible sound and great roar of the vajra can be heard, mixed with that of the wind. My soul is repeatedly distressed. O brahmana! All my tranquility has vanished now.'

'"Samvarta replied, 'O Indra among men! Your anxiety on account of the vajra and the wind will soon be dispelled. I will destroy the vajra. Abandon your fear and ask for a boon from me. What do you desire my austerities to accomplish for you?'

'"Marutta said, 'O brahmana! I desire that Indra should suddenly manifest himself at this sacrifice and receive the oblations that are being offered. Let all the gods accept their respective shares and receive the soma that has been extracted.'

'"Samvarta replied, 'O king! I have invoked Indra with his horses and with all the gods, so that they come and drink soma. They have now been summoned to this sacrifice because of the mantras. Behold their forms, terrified by the mantras.'"

'Vyasa continued, "The king of the gods was on a chariot, to which, the best of tawny horses were yoked. With the gods, he came to the sacrifice of the immeasurable king who was Avikshit's son, to drink the soma. He came with a large number of gods. With his priest, Marutta arose to greet them. Following the ordinances laid down in the sacred texts, he cheerfully worshipped the king of the gods with the best of honours.

'"Samvarta said, 'O Puruhuta! Welcome. O learned one! O slayer of Bala and Vritra! O Indra! Through your presence here, this sacrifice has become more resplendent. Drink the soma that I have extracted.'

'"Marutta added, 'I bow down before you. Look on me benevolently. While I am alive, may I successfully obtain the fruits of the sacrifice. O Indra of the gods! This sacrifice has been conducted by the one who is younger to Brihaspati in birth.'

'"Indra replied, 'I know this preceptor, who is a store of austerities. He is sharp in his energy and is Brihaspati's younger brother. O Indra among men! I have come because of his summons. I am pleased with you now and my anger has been destroyed.'

'"Samvarta said, 'O king of the gods! If you are pleased, then instruct us about the rites of the sacrifice yourself. O Indra of the gods! O god! You yourself determine the modes that must be followed and let all the worlds know that this has been done by you.'"

'Vyasa continued, "Shakra was thus addressed by the son of Angiras. He himself instructed the gods that an assembly hall, with the best of rooms, should be constructed. These had colourful and expensive floors. Large staircases were swiftly erected for the large numbers of gandharvas and

apsaras. These were constructed in the sacrificial ground, so that thousands of apsaras could dance along these and ascend towards heaven. O Indra among men! Thus addressed by Shakra, the residents of heaven happily and quickly acted in accordance with his words. O king! Delighted at being worshipped by King Marutta, Indra spoke these words to him. 'O king! All the other kings who were your ancestors have come here to meet you. O king! All the other gods are also delighted. They have accepted the oblations from you. On my instructions, let the bulls among brahmanas now offer a bull with a reddish complexion to Agni and a multicoloured bull with blue eyes that have the complexion of the clouds to the Vishvadevas.' Thus, the king's sacrifice prospered. The gods themselves offered the food and oblations. Shakra, the king of the gods, with the horses, was worshipped by the brahmanas and himself became an assistant priest at the sacrifice. The great-souled Samvarta ascended the altar, like a second fire that had been kindled. He summoned the large numbers of gods with mantras that were pronounced extremely well and offered oblations into the fire. The slayer of Bala drank the best of soma. The other residents of heaven also drank soma. They were satisfied and delighted. Having taken the king's permission, all of them then departed. The king, the slayer of enemies, cheerfully arranged for large piles of gold, here and there. He gave away a large amount of riches to the brahmanas and was as dazzling as the lord of riches. The king collected many kinds of wealth and built up his treasury. Then, with the permission of his preceptor, he returned[34] and ruled the entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. These were the qualities of the king who performed a sacrifice with large amounts of gold. O Indra among men! You should collect those riches. Following the prescribed rites, you should perform a sacrifice and satisfy the gods."'

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing the words of Satyavati's son, the Pandava king was delighted. He made up his mind to perform a sacrifice with that wealth. Therefore, he again consulted his advisers.'

## Chapter 1846(11)

Vaishampayana said, 'The king was thus addressed by Vyasa, whose deeds were extraordinary. After this, the immensely energetic Vasudeva also spoke some words. The king was distressed in his mind. His kin and relatives had been slain. He was like an eclipsed sun or a fire covered by smoke. Discerning that Partha's mind was cheerless, the extender of the Vrishni lineage wished to comfort Dharma's son and spoke these words.

'Vasudeva said, "All deceit leads to death. All uprightness leads to the state of the brahman. If you possess wisdom about this, then why are you lamenting? You have not completed your assigned tasks. Nor have your enemies been vanquished. How can you not comprehend the enemies that exist within your own body? I have heard of an account that transpired, following dharma. There was an encounter between Indra and Vritra. O lord of men! In ancient times, the entire earth was enveloped by Vritra. When the earth was enveloped, it was seen that all fragrances disappeared from earth. The earth having been seized, bad smells arose from the earth. At scent having vanished from the earth, Shatakratu was enraged. He angrily released the terrible vajra at Vritra. Thus struck by the vajra, the immensely energetic one entered the earth. Having violently entered the water, he seized all taste from there. Wrathfully, Shatakratu released the vajra again. In the water, the immensely energetic one was

struck by the vajra. He violently entered energy and seized the essence from there. Enveloped by Vritra, energy lost its attribute of form. Angrily, Shatakratu released his vajra there. The immensely energetic one was severely struck by the vajra. He violently entered wind and seized the essence from there. Enveloped by Vritra, the wind lost its attribute of touch. Shatakratu angrily released his vajra there. The immensely energetic one was struck by the vajra there. He entered space and seized the essence from there. With Vritra in space, the attribute of sound vanished. Shatakratu angrily released his vajra there. The immensely energetic one was struck by the vajra there. He violently entered Shakra and stole all the attributes from there. Thus seized by Vritra, he was overcome by great confusion. O son! Vasishtha brought him back to his senses by using the rathantara hymn. O bull among the Bharata lineage! We have heard that Shatakratu then used an invisible vajra to slay Vritra inside his body. Shakra told the maharshis about this mystery of dharma. O lord of men! The rishis told me about this. Listen."'

## Chapter 1847(12)

'Vasudeva said, "There are two kinds of diseases, physical and mental. They are never generated without a conflict between these two.[35] There is no doubt that a disease produced in the body is physical. It has been determined that a disease produced in the mind is mental. O king! Cold, heat and wind are physical qualities.[36] When these qualities are in balance, it is then said that one exhibits the signs of being healthy. Heat obstructs the cold and cold obstructs the heat. Sattva, rajas and tamas are said to be the three qualities.[37] When these qualities are in balance, it is then said that one exhibits the signs of being healthy.[38] If there is an excess of any of these, antidotes have been prescribed. Joy counters misery. Joy is countered by misery. When misery is present, some desire to remember joy.[39] When joy is present, some desire to remember misery.[40] O Kounteya! That is the nature of unhappiness in misery and the happiness in joy. What do you wish to remember? Destiny is most powerful. O Partha! Is it the case that your innate nature is afflicting you? You saw Krishna[41] brought to the assembly hall in a single garment, when she was in season. All the Pandaveyas looked on. Do you not remember that? You were banished from the city, attired in hides and bereft of garments. You were exiled to the great forest. You do not wish to remember that. You were afflicted by Jatasura, there was a battle with Chitrasena and you were oppressed by Saindhava. You do not wish to remember that. O Partha! You again dwelt in disguise and Kichaka struck Yajnaseni with his foot.[42] You do not wish to remember that. O destroyer of enemies! There was an encounter with Bhishma and Drona. However, there is a battle that has presented itself now and you must fight it in your mind, alone. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Therefore, you must prepare yourself for that encounter. This is supremely unmanifest in form. You must free yourself and reach the other side through your own deeds. There are no arrows, no tasks, no servants and no relatives. In the battle that has presented itself, you must fight your soul alone. If you win this battle, you will obtain the state that you desire. O Kounteya! Knowing this, do what needs to be done. Use your intelligence to determine the coming and going of all creatures. Follow the conduct of your fathers and grandfathers and rule the kingdom appropriately."'

# Chapter 1848(13)

‘Vasudeva said, “O descendant of the Bharata lineage! One does not obtain success by giving up external objects. Success may or may not be obtained by giving up physical objects. Even if one is freed from external objects, one may still hanker after the body. Let the dharma and happiness that results from this be the lot of the enemy. The word *mrityu* has two syllables.[43] The eternal brahman has three syllables.[44] A sense of ownership has two syllables and represents death.[45] A lack of ownership is eternal. O king! Both mrityu and the brahman are inside all creatures, though they are invisible. There is no doubt that they are fighting with each other. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! If it is true that the soul is indestructible and eternal, then no injury results if one strikes the physical bodies of creatures. Having obtained the earth with all its mobile and immobile objects, if a person has no sense of ownership, there is nothing else left for him to do. O Partha! But there may be a person who dwells in the forest, surviving on forest fare. If he still possesses a sense of ownership in objects, he is in the jaws of death. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Behold the nature of external and internal enemies. If a person can see this in creatures, he is freed from great fear. In this world, those with desire in the soul are not praised. But without desire, there can be no inclination towards action. It is because of desire that one often undertakes the rites of the Vedas, donations, studying the Vedas and austerities. Know the vows, sacrifices, rituals, meditation and yoga that are not begun because of desire. That which is not undertaken because of desire is dharma. Something with rituals as the foundation does not constitute dharma. Those who know about the ancient accounts have chanted the *kamagita* in this connection.[46] O Yudhishthira! Listen to that being recounted in its entirety. ‘No creature is capable of destroying me without using the proper methods. If someone knows my strength and tries to destroy me using weapons, I destroy him using those same weapons and manifest myself again. If he tries to destroy me through sacrifices that involve many kinds of dakshina, I become those mobile objects and the soul of those rites, thus manifesting myself again. If he tries to destroy me through the rites of the Vedas and Vedanta, I become the tranquil soul in those immobile objects and manifest myself again. If someone tries to destroy me through fortitude and the valour of truth, I become those sentiments and he is not able to comprehend me. If someone tries to destroy me through austerities and rigidity in vows, I base myself on those austerities and manifest myself again. If a learned man tries to destroy me by resorting to moksha, I base myself on that state of moksha and laugh and dance. Amongst all creatures, I alone cannot be slain and am eternal.’ Therefore, you should desire to perform a sacrifice with many kinds of dakshina. O great king! Act in accordance with dharma and kama will also be served by that. Perform a horse sacrifice with the prescribed kinds of dakshina. Perform the other prescribed sacrifices, prosperous with dakshina. Do not look towards your slain relatives and be repeatedly distressed. You are incapable of again seeing those who have been killed in the field of battle. Perform great sacrifices, rich with copious quantities of dakshina. You will then obtain fame in this world and obtain the supreme destination after death.”’

# Chapter 1849(14)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Rajarshi Yudhishthira’s relatives had been slain. The sages, rich in austerities, used many kinds of words to comfort him. He was entreated by the illustrious Vishtarashrava himself, Krishna Dvaipayana, the lord Devasthana, Narada, Bhima, King Nakula, Krishna,[47] Sahadeva, the intelligent Vijaya[48] and many other tigers among men and brahmanas who were learned about the sacred texts. He was thus relieved of his sorrow, grief and mental depression. Yudhishthira worshipped the gods and the brahmanas. The king again performed the funeral rites for his dead relatives. The one with dharma in his soul ruled the earth, right up to the frontiers of the ocean. Having obtained only his own kingdom,[49] Kouravya’s mind was tranquil. The king spoke to Vyasa, Narada and the others. “I have been comforted by the aged ones who are bulls among sages. I do not have the slightest bit of affliction left. I have also obtained a great deal of riches, with which, I can sacrifice to the gods. With you at the forefront, I will perform the sacrifice. O grandfather![50] We will go to what is protected in the Himalayas. O supreme among brahmanas! We have heard that the region is extremely wonderful. O illustrious one! You have spoken a lot about that colourful and fortunate spot and so have devarshi Narada and Devasthana. But no man can go there without the sanction of the gods and the preceptors, without honouring virtuous well-wishers. Otherwise, he will face hardships.” The king said this to all the maharshis, who took the permission of the king and that of Krishna and Phalguna, and while everyone looked on, instantly vanished. The king, the lord who was Dharma’s son, remained seated. They spent a long period of time there. They performed the purification rites for the slain Bhishma. In the course of the funeral rites, they gave many gifts to brahmanas. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! With Dhritarashtra, they donated at the funeral rites of the Kurus, Bhishma and Karna being the foremost. The bulls among the Pandavas gave many riches to brahmanas. Then, with Dhritarashtra at the forefront, they entered Gajasahvya.[51] With his brothers, the one with dharma in his soul ruled the earth. He comforted his father, the lord for whom his wisdom was his sight.’

## Chapter 1850(15)

Janamejaya asked, ‘O supreme among brahmanas! Having conquered the kingdom, the Pandaveyas were tranquil. What did the brave Vasudeva and Dhananjaya do?’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘O lord of the earth! Having conquered the kingdom, the Pandaveyas were tranquil. Vasudeva and Dhananjaya were delighted. They sported in pleasure, like the lord of the gods in heaven. They progressively sported in colourful groves, the slopes of mountains, colourful valleys, lakes and rivers. They were like the two Ashvins in Nandana.[52] The great-souled Krishna and Pandava found pleasure in Indraprastha. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! They entered the assembly hall and sported there. O king! They conversed and recounted the colourful stories of the war and tales of the hardships. They spoke about the lineages of the rishis and the gods. Those great-souled ones, the ancient and excellent rishis,[53] were delighted.

‘Keshava knew about the significance of everything and spoke to Partha. His words were colourful in purport, meaning and diction. He spoke these gentle and wonderful words. Partha was tormented on account of grief over his son and the death of thousands of relatives. Shouri Janardana comforted

him with these words. The great ascetic knew about all the rites and comforted him in the prescribed way. After Satvata had removed the burden from his mind, he rested for a while. When the accounts were over, Govinda spoke to Gudakesha. These words were comforting and gentle. These words were full of reason. “O Savyasachi! O scorcher of enemies! By resorting to the strength of your arms, the king who is Dharma’s son has conquered the entire earth. O supreme among men! Without any rivals, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira can now enjoy the earth, through the powers of Bhimasena and the twins. O one who knows about dharma! It is through dharma that the king has obtained the kingdom, bereft of thorns. It is through dharma that King Suyodhana has been slain in the battle. The sons of Dhritarashtra were addicted to adharma and greedy. They were always disagreeable in speech. They were evil-souled and have been brought down with their relatives. O Partha! The entire earth is peaceful. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Protected by you, the king who is Dharma’s son is the lord of the earth and can enjoy it. O Pandava! With you, I have been sporting in this forest. O afflicter of enemies! But where are the others? Where is Pritha? I am greatly attracted towards the place where the king who is Dharma’s son, the immensely strong Bhima and Madravati’s two sons are. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This assembly hall is like heaven. O unblemished one! It is beautiful and sacred and I have spent time with you here. O son of a brave father! O Kouravya! A long period of time has elapsed without my seeing Baladeva and the other bulls among the Vrishni lineage. I wish to now go towards the city of Dvaravati. O bull among men! It seems to me that you should also go. When King Yudhishthira was afflicted by grief, Bhishma and I spoke many things to him. The virtuous Pandava Yudhishthira ruled according to those words. The extremely great-souled one exhibited proper respect towards those words. Dharma’s son knows about dharma. He is grateful and truthful in speech. His mind is first fixed on truth and dharma. He is always established in fortitude. O Arjuna! If it so pleases you, you should go to that great-souled one. Tell the lord of men that I wish to leave this place. O mighty-armed one! Even if I am faced with the prospect of losing my life, I cannot do anything that causes him displeasure. How can I go to the city of Dvaravati without asking him? O Partha! With affection towards you and desiring your welfare, I have told you everything. O Kouravya! I have told you the truth. I have never uttered a lie. O Arjuna! The reason for my residing here is over now. The king who was Dhritarashtra’s son has been killed, with his soldiers and his followers. O son![54] The earth is under the subjugation of Dharma’s intelligent son. Pandava, king of the Kurus is instated there, with the mountains, forests and groves, with many kinds of riches and with the ocean as a garment. The king knows about dharma. He will follow dharma and protect the entire earth. He will be worshipped by many great-souled siddhas. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He will always be praised by the bards. You should now go with me to the king who is the extender of the Kurus. O tiger among the Kurus! Having taken his permission, I will leave for Dvaraka. O Partha! I have always offered this body and all the riches in my house to Yudhishthira. I have always loved and honoured the immensely intelligent Yudhishthira, the lord of the Kurus. O mighty-armed one! With the exception of you, there is no other reason left for me to reside here any longer. O Partha! Your senior, Yudhishthira, is excellent in his conduct and the earth is established under his rule.” The great-souled Janardana spoke in this way to the infinitely valorous Arjuna. O king! Though he wasn’t happy, he reluctantly agreed and honoured Janardana.’

# Chapter 1851(16)

Janamejaya asked, ‘When the enemies were slain, those great-souled ones, Keshava and Arjuna, dwelt in the assembly hall. O brahmana! What was the conversation between them?’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘Having regained his own kingdom, Partha resided in that beautiful assembly hall with Krishna and sported, filled with delight. O king! That region was like a spot in heaven. Surrounded by their relatives, they cheerfully roamed around, as they willed. With Krishna, Pandava Arjuna looked at that beautiful assembly hall and spoke these words. “O mighty-armed one! O son of Devaki! When the battle presented itself, I got to know about your greatness, the truth about your lordship and your form. O Keshava! Out of affection towards me, you spoke to me then. O tiger among men! However, my intelligence has been destroyed and I have forgotten everything. O lord! However, my curiosity about that truth has again been ignited. O Madhava! You will soon go away to Dvaraka.” Having been thus addressed, the greatly energetic Krishna, supreme among eloquent ones, embraced Phalguna and replied in these words. “I made you listen to something that is eternal and secret. O Partha! That was about the nature of eternal dharma for all the worlds. I am greatly displeased that you have ignorantly not grasped what I told you. O Pandava! It is evident that you have not been faithful, or your intelligence is not adequate. That dharma is sufficient to obtain the state of the brahman. However, I am incapable of telling you everything in detail again. I immersed myself in yoga and told you about the supreme brahman.[55] But I will tell you about an ancient history with the same purport. Using that, if you use your intelligence, you will reach the ultimate destination. O best among those who uphold dharma! Hear everything attentively. O scorcher of enemies! On one occasion, a brahmana came to the world of heaven. He was unassailable and arrived from Brahma’s world. He was worshipped by us. O bull among the Bharata lineage! When he was asked by us, he followed the divine rites and answered us. Without any hesitation, listen to that.

‘“The brahmana said, ‘O Krishna! What you have asked me concerns the adoption of the dharma of moksha. O lord! This is driven by compassion for creatures and is meant to sever delusion. O Madhusudana! I will tell you about it accurately. O Madhava! Listen attentively to me. There was a brahmana named Kashyapa. He was full of austerities and rich in dharma. He went to another brahmana who knew everything about the sacred texts of dharma. He[56] was accomplished in jnana and vijnana and knew the past and the future in great detail. He was skilled in the truth about the worlds and knew about misery and joy. He knew the truth about birth and death. He was wise about virtue and sin. He knew about the superior and inferior ends that embodied beings obtained, depending on their deeds. He roamed around, emancipated and successful. He was tranquil and in control over his senses. He blazed in the prosperity of the brahman and could go everywhere. He knew how to disappear. Thus, he would vanish with the siddhas and the lords of the world. He would sit down with them and converse alone. Unattached, he would roam around as he willed, like the wind. The intelligent Kashyapa heard the truth about him. The supreme among brahmanas went and met him. Desiring dharma, he controlled himself well and fell down at the feet of the ascetic. He met him in the appropriate way, filled with great devotion. Kashyapa was astounded on seeing that extraordinary person, who was supreme among brahmanas. To satisfy him and obtain learning, he served his preceptor with great devotion. He[57] possessed learning and character. O scorcher of

enemies! By following the conduct and sentiments due to a preceptor, he pleased him. Having been pleased with the disciple, the preceptor considered supreme success and spoke to the disciple. O Janardana! Listen to those words from me. “O son![58] Through different kinds of deeds and also by resorting to auspicious yoga, those who are mortal can obtain a place in the world of the gods. However, there is no happiness that is extreme. There is no status that is eternal. When one is dislodged from a great state, one repeatedly has to face misery again. Because I practised sin, I obtained inauspicious ends and suffered misery. I was overcome by desire, anger, thirst and delusion. I have repeatedly gone through death and birth. I have eaten many kinds of food. I have suckled at many kinds of breasts. I have seen many kinds of mothers and fathers who are different from each other. O unblemished one! I have faced diverse kinds of happiness and unhappiness. There are many occasions when I have been separated from what I love and united with what I do not love. I have confronted the destruction of riches. I have faced misery on account of those riches. I have suffered disrespect and great hardships on account of relatives and those who are not related. I have suffered from extreme and terrible physical and mental pain. I have faced extreme dishonour and the terrible death of my relatives. I have descended into hell and suffered hardships in Yama’s abode. There have always been old age, disease and many kinds of hardship. In this world, I have experienced extreme opposite sentiments. After a time, I became indifferent, beyond the opposites and without a desire to do anything. Afflicted by great grief, I abandoned this world. Through the tranquility in the atman, I then obtained this success. I will not come to this world again, nor will I go to any other world. Amidst this creation of subjects, I have tasted success and my atman obtained an auspicious end. O best among brahmanas! That is the reason I have experienced excellent success. From here, I will go to the supreme. From there, I will go to what is superior still. There is no doubt that I will obtain the foremost state of being merged with the brahman. O scorcher of enemies! I will not return to the mortal world again. O immensely wise one! I am pleased with you. Tell me what I can do for you. The time for your desires to be satisfied has arrived. Indeed, I know the reason why you have come here. I will soon leave this place. That is the reason I have told you this. I am extremely pleased with you, at your character and your discernment. Ask what you want and I will tell you what you want to hear. Since you have shown me this great honour, I deeply respect your intelligence. O Kashyapa! You clearly possess intelligence and understanding.”’”’

## Chapter 1852(17)

‘Vasudeva said, “Touching his feet, he[59] asked some questions that were extremely difficult to answer. “I am asking you about all of those. O supreme among the upholders of dharma!” Tell me that.

‘“Kashyapa asked, ‘How does the body go away and how does one get another again? How is one freed from the hardships of this cycle of life? Having freed oneself from the body, how is one united with the atman? Having been freed from this body, how does one obtain another end? How does a man enjoy the fruits of the good and bad deeds done by him? If one is freed from the body, what kind of acts can be undertaken?’

‘“The brahmana[60] said, ‘Thus asked, the siddha replied to the questions, one after another. O Varshneya! Listen to my words.

‘“‘The siddha replied, “A body is adopted to perform acts that increase the lifespan and bring fame. However, all of these eventually decay. When there is little of lifespan left, the jivatman begins to act in a contrary way. When destruction presents itself, his[61] intelligence turns perverse. The jivatman knows his spirit, strength and the time. Yet, though it acts against the jivatman, he eats excessively and out of season.[62] He serves everything that causes greater difficulties for him. He eats too much, or does not eat at all. He tastes rotten food and tainted food and other kinds that are perverse. He eats more food than he should. Or he eats before the earlier food has been digested. He indulges in excessive exercise or sexual intercourse. Though his natural speed has diminished, overcome by greed, he always engages in tasks. He eats food that is too juicy. Or he sleeps during the day. Even when the time has not come, these taints cause agitation that are brought on by the person himself.[63] There is disease because of these taints and death comes as the end. Sometimes, one resorts to hanging and other methods.[64] Else, though alive, the physical body of a creature decays because of such things. I am telling you what should be understood. When the wind in the body is fierce and begins to blow violently, heat is generated. This reaches all parts of the body and constrains the breath of life. Know that when the heat in the body becomes excessive, strong and violent, it injures the inner organs and the place where the breath of life resides. In great pain, the physical body of the jivatman melts away. The inner organs are pierced and the creature gives up the physical body. O supreme among brahmanas! Know that the jivatman suffers great pain. All creatures are always extremely anxious about birth and death. O bull among brahmanas! They are seen to abandon the physical bodies. Human beings experience a similar kind of pain when they enter a womb or emerge from the inner organs.[65] A man’s joints are shattered and he suffers in the moistness. When the wind in the body is fierce and begins to blow violently, cold is also generated. Then, the body seeks refuge in the five elements. The five elements are established in *prana* and *apana*. This breath of life ascends upwards and causing hardship, frees itself from the body. When it leaves the body, there is no longer any life to be seen. There is no heat. There is no breath. There is no beauty and the senses have left. When the brahman[66] abandons the body, a man is said to be dead. There are ducts through which a person with a body perceives the objects of the senses. However, the breath of life, which is sustained through food, can no longer see them. The eternal jivatman makes those ducts in the body work. These are sometimes combined together and sometimes they collapse. Know that the sacred texts have stated these to be the inner organs. When those inner organs are shattered, the jivatman rises up and enters the heart, thereby swiftly curtailing all spirit. In such a situation, despite being conscious, a creature cannot discern anything. The inner organs are overwhelmed and knowledge is enveloped in darkness. The jivatman no longer has a place to reside and is agitated by the wind. At such a time, the being breathes deeply and breathes extremely painfully. The jivatman emerges swiftly, causing trembling. The body is bereft of sensation. The jivatman discards the body, but is still enveloped by its own deeds. It is marked by all its sacred and auspicious acts and also by all its wicked deeds. There are brahmanas who are accomplished in knowledge and also possess the determinations of the sacred texts. Through the signs, they can discern whether good or bad deeds have been committed. Even when it is dark, those with eyes can see fireflies appear and disappear. In that way, those who possess

the sight of knowledge can see. Similarly, successful ones with divine sight can see the act of a creature abandoning the body and being born again, as it enters a womb. According to the sacred texts, a creature is seen to occupy three spots. There is *karmabhumi*, the arena of action. All creatures reap the fruits of their good and bad deeds there. Depending on the good deeds they have themselves performed in this world, they reap the fruits. Those with wicked deeds in this world go to hell, because of those deeds. A wicked man cannot speak and is severely cooked in hell. Since it is extremely difficult for the atman to be freed from such a state, one must do one's utmost to protect oneself against this. There are states obtained by creatures that ascend upwards. I will recount the truth about these. Listen to me. Having heard, you will obtain faith and intelligence. Using that intelligence, you will be able to determine the course of action. There are many like stars in the lunar disc and the solar disc. Through their own radiance, they shine in those worlds. Know that these, and others, are meant for men who are the performers of auspicious deeds. However, when these deeds are exhausted, they are repeatedly dislodged from there. Heaven is superior to these. But even there, the superior, the medium and the inferior exist. There is discontent there,[67] whenever one sees prosperity that is more blazing than one's own. These are all the separate destinations that have been recounted. I will now tell you about the origin in the womb. O brahmana! When I recount the truth about this, listen attentively."'"'

## Chapter 1853(18)

"'"The brahmana said, 'Good and bad acts committed in this world are never destroyed. As one body is obtained after another body, the fruits are cooked there. A high-yielding fruit tree produces large quantities of fruit. In that way, deeds performed with an auspicious mind yield a great deal. This is also true of wicked deeds perpetrated with an evil mind. In this world, the atman places the mind at the forefront and then undertakes action. After this, listen to how a man enters a womb, when deeds are instructed by desire and anger. Semen is created from blood and enters a woman's womb. The body is derived from acts and is a function of good and bad acts. The brahman[68] is subtle and unmanifest in nature. It resorts to the body, but is not attached to anything. That is the reason, it is the eternal brahman. This is the seed of all beings and it is because of this that all creatures are alive. Having entered the womb, the jivatman penetrates all the different limbs in the body. Basing itself on the place meant for the breath of life, it instantly imparts consciousness. The limbs begin to move and the foetus has consciousness. When liquid iron is drained and poured into a mould, it assumes the form of an idol. Know that this is the way the jivatman approaches and penetrates a foetus. When fire enters a lump of iron, it heats it up. Know that this is the way the jivatman approaches and penetrates a foetus. When one uses a lamp, the light illuminates everything. In that way, consciousness illuminates different parts of the body. Whatever deeds have been committed, good or bad, in an earlier life, all of these must certainly be enjoyed. These are thus extinguished and others are again gathered together. This continues as long as one does not understand the dharma that leads to moksha. O excellent one! When one is born and is repeatedly circling around, I will tell you about the dharma that ensures happiness. Donations, vows, brahmacharya, sustaining the prescribed rites, self-restraint,

tranquility, compassion towards all beings, self-control, lack of injury, not appropriating the possessions of others, uprightness, abstention from futile censure of all creatures on earth, serving the mother and the father, worshipping gods and ancestors, worship of seniors, tenderness, purity towards others, constant restraint of the senses and ensuring what is auspicious—these are said to be virtuous conduct. Dharma flows from this and protects subjects eternally. This conduct is always seen among the virtuous and they obtain a state that is permanent. Conduct in conformity with dharma is said to be that which is resorted to by those who are virtuous. They immerse themselves in dharma and this is the dharma that is eternal. If one resorts to this, one never has to confront extreme hardship. When the world is deluded, it is through such rules that it is brought back to the path of dharma. Yogis and those who are emancipated are superior to these.[69] If a man follows the appropriate dharma, he is freed from this cycle of life after a long period of time. In this way, all creatures have to follow their earlier deeds. All the wicked deeds are the reason why one has arrived in this world. Who first determined the acceptance of a body?[70] There is a doubt in the world about this. I will tell you about this next. The grandfather of all creatures first created his own body. Brahma then created the three worlds and all the mobile and immobile objects. Having adopted a body, Pradhana created consciousness. This pervades all the worlds and is known as supreme. This is said to be Kshara. The other one is immortal and Akshara.[71] There are couples formed of these three. They all exist together, but they also exist separately. In his first creation, Prajapati created all the creatures and the immobile objects. This is what the sacred texts say about that ancient account. Thereafter, the grandfather determined the measurement of time and decreed the going and coming of creatures.[72] There may be a person who has seen his atman and knows about his earlier birth. I will accurately tell you everything that such a person would say, or has experienced. Such a person always looks upon happiness and unhappiness as transitory. He regards the body as a vigorous arena for conflicting action, certain to decay. Whenever there is happiness, he remembers all the unhappiness. Such a person is able to cross this ocean that is the cycle of life and which is so very difficult to traverse. Immersed in birth, death and disease, he knows about Pradhana. Basing his consciousness on that universal consciousness, he looks upon all creatures impartially. He is indifferent towards everything and seeks for the supreme path and destination. O excellent one! I will tell you and instruct you about the true nature of that. That is the eternal and undecaying state. That is supreme knowledge. O brahmana! I will tell you about it in detail. Listen to me.’”’

## Chapter 1854(19)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘A person who submerges himself in that receptacle,[73] not thinking about his own self, not even thinking about his own identity, progressively casting off the layers, is freed from all bonds.[74] He is a friend to everyone. He endures everything. He is attached to tranquility. He has conquered his senses. He has overcome fear and anger. He has killed desire. Such a man is emancipated. He sees himself in all beings. He is controlled and pure. He is without insolence and without ego. Such a man is emancipated in every way. He is impartial towards both life and death, happiness and unhappiness, gain and loss and the pleasant and the unpleasant. Such a man is

emancipated. He does not desire what belongs to someone else. He does not show disrespect towards anyone. He is beyond opposite pairs of sentiments and is devoid of attachment. Such a man is emancipated in every way. He has no enemy. He has no friend. He has no offspring. He has abandoned dharma, artha and kama. He does not hope for anything. Such a man is emancipated. He has neither dharma nor adharma. He has cast aside everything from earlier.[75] When the elements waste away,[76] he is tranquil in his soul. He is without the opposite pairs of sentiments. Such a man is emancipated. He has no acts. He has no hope and only looks at the eternal universe, always submerged helplessly in ill health, delusion and the cycle of birth. His intelligence is always focused on detachment. He is indifferent towards difficulties of heat and cold. In a short while, he is able to free himself from his own bonds. He sees his own atman, which does not experience smell, taste, touch, sound and ownership and is without form and difficult to comprehend. Such a man is emancipated. It[77] is independent of the five elements. It is without form and without cause. Though it enjoys the qualities, it is without qualities. A man who sees the atman in this way is emancipated. He uses his intelligence to cast aside all resolutions of the body and of the mind. Like a fire that is without kindling, such a person gradually obtains liberation. He is freed from all sacraments and obtains the eternal brahman. He obtains the supreme, which is tranquil and stable. This is the celestial Akshara. Thereafter, I will tell you about the supreme and sacred texts of yoga. Knowing this, in this world, yogis obtain success and see their own atmans. I will convey the instructions accurately, as I see them. Listen to me. By always following this conduct, one passes through those doors and sees one's atman in one's own self. The senses must be restrained. The mind must be fixed on the atman. Having first tormented oneself through terrible austerities, one must then undertake this yoga. An ascetic abandons all resolution. He is devoid of pride and ego. A learned brahmana uses his mind to see his atman in his own self. Such a virtuous person is capable of seeing his atman in his own self. Devoted to good conduct alone, he sees his atman in his own self. He is always full of restraint. He is united with his atman. He conquers his senses. Such a virtuous person, engaged in yoga, sees his atman in his own self. In a dream, a man may see someone and recognizing him on waking up, exclaim, "This is he." In that way, a virtuous person engaged in yoga sees the image of the atman.[78] When the outer case is extracted from munja grass, the strand inside can be seen. In that way, taking away the body, the yogi sees the atman. The outer case of the munja grass is like the body. The inner strand is the beautiful atman. Those who know about the excellent texts of yoga cite this as an example. When a person with a body is united with yoga and sees the atman properly, there is no one who can bring him down. He is like the lord of the three worlds. As he wishes, he moves from one body to another one. Without any joy and without any grief, he withdraws himself from the phenomena of old age and death. Such a person, engaged in yoga, can become a god over all the gods. Casting aside this temporary body, he obtains the undecaying brahman. Even if all the worlds are destroyed, no fear is generated in him. Even if all creatures are afflicted, he is not afflicted in the slightest way. A person who uses yoga to unite with his atman is without desire and tranquil in his mind. He is not disturbed by sorrow, misery, fear, terror, or the affection that flows from attachment. Weapons do not pierce him. There is no death for him. There is no one in any world who is happier than him. Having properly engaged himself in yoga, he looks at his atman. No one can touch him, not even Shatakratu himself. If one has engaged in yoga, one obtains a state of indifference. This requires single-minded devotion to yoga alone. Listen

to how one must embark on yoga. Wherever one resides, one must think of the eastern direction. The mind should be fixed inside the house, not outside. Wherever one resides, one must remain inside that house. In that abode, the mind must be taken away from external and internal distractions and fixed on the room that one is in. All the thoughts must then be withdrawn and fixed on the body one inhabits. The mind must be fixed on the body, never on anything outside it. One can control all one's senses in a silent and desolate forest.[79] One must single-mindedly fix all one's thoughts inside the body. One must meditate on the teeth, the palate, the tongue, the throat, the neck, the heart and the arteries and veins inside the heart.'

'"The brahmana said,[80] 'O Madhusudana! Thus addressed by me, the intelligent disciple again asked me about moksha dharma, which is extremely difficult to explain. "How is the food, eaten every once in a while, digested in the stomach? How does it become juices? How is blood generated from that? How does this sustain flesh, marrow, sinews and bones? How do all the limbs of embodied creatures grow? As one keeps growing, how does the strength increase? How is waste that is without substance separately excreted? How does one inhale and exhale? Which part of the body is inhabited by the atman? How does the jivatman exert itself and move the body around? What is the complexion of the mind and where does it dwell?" O Madhava! I was asked this by that brahmana. O mighty-armed one! O scorcher of enemies! Based on what I had heard, I replied. "If one has a vessel full of riches, one places it in a room and guards it with one's mind. In that way, the mind must be guarded in the body and prevented from wavering. One must fix it on the path that leads to the atman and discard all carelessness. If one always exerts in this way, one will soon find delight in the atman. One will see and obtain the brahman and become knowledgable about Pradhana. It cannot be grasped with the eyes, or with all the other senses. The great atman[81]can be seen with the lamp of the mind. His hands and feet are in all the directions. His eyes, head and faces are in all the directions. The creature sees the atman, extracted from the body. Having abandoned the body, he is sustained only by the brahman. As if smiling in delight, he sees the atman with the help of his mind. 'O supreme among brahmanas![82] I have now told you about all the mysteries. O disciple! I grant you permission. Cheerfully, go wherever you wish to.'" O Krishna! Having been thus addressed, my immensely ascetic disciple, the brahmana, went away as he desired, his doubts having been dispelled.'"

'Vasudeva continued, "O Partha! These are the words the bull among brahmanas spoke to me at that time. These were appropriate words for those who wish to resort to moksha dharma. He then disappeared. O Partha! Have you heard this truth with single-minded attention? This is exactly what you heard when you were on your chariot.[83] O Partha! It is my view that a man who is not accomplished in consciousness, is not learned and has not cleansed his soul, will be confused about this and will find it extremely difficult to grasp it. O bull among the Bharata lineage! This is a great secret even among the gods. O Partha! It is rare for any other mortal to have heard it, anywhere. O unblemished one! No man other than you deserves to hear it. A person whose soul is confused will not be able to comprehend it easily. O Kounteya! The world of the gods is full of those who observe rites. For those who have mortal forms, the gods disapprove of withdrawal from sacrifices.[84] O Partha! The eternal brahman is the supreme destination. One obtains immortality there, abandoning misery. One is always happy. O Partha! If they resort to this dharma, those with inferior births, women, vaishyas and shudras, also go to the supreme destination, not to speak of extremely learned

brahmanas and kshatriyas, who are always devoted to their own dharma and to the object of obtaining Brahma's world. This has been indicated in the reasons and means for that pursuit. There are determinations about misery and the successful obtaining of the fruits of emancipation. O bull among the Bharata lineage! There is no bliss that is superior to this. O Pandava! A man who is learned, faithful and brave, one who abandons the insubstantial practices of the mortal world, can use these means to quickly obtain the supreme destination. This is all that needs to be said and there is nothing more. O Partha! This becomes evident if one steadily practises yoga for six months."'

## Chapter 1855(20)

'Vasudeva said, "O Partha! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted, one that is known as the conversation between a couple. There was a brahmana who was accomplished in vijnana. On seeing that he was seated alone, the brahmani, the wife, spoke to her husband. 'I am devoted to my husband. What world will be obtained by me? You are seated here, having abandoned all rites. You do not discern that I am uneasy. We have heard that a wife goes to the world obtained by her husband. I am devoted to my husband. What is the destination I will obtain?' The one who was tranquil in his soul was addressed in this way. He smiled and replied, 'O fortunate one! O unblemished one! I have not taken umbrage at your words. There are acts that are accepted,[85] seen and heard. Those who are devoted to acts practise these acts and follow these acts. Those who try to withdraw from all acts are confused and bereft of knowledge. In this mortal world, there can never be freedom from acts. Whatever is committed, good or bad, in deeds, thoughts and speech, leads to differences in birth and form among creatures. Deeds are always vested in creatures. Material objects used in rites[86] are seen to be destroyed by rakshasas. Having seen the seat of the atman inside myself, I have based myself there. The brahman, devoid of opposite sentiments, is there. So are Soma and Agni. Vayu always courses there, sustaining creatures with fortitude.[87] That is the reason Brahma and the others practise yoga and worship Akshara. This is also sought by those who are learned, excellent in their vows, tranquil in their souls and in control of their senses. The nose cannot smell it. The tongue cannot taste it. The organ of touch cannot touch it. It can only be obtained through the mind. The eye cannot see it. It is beyond any sense of hearing. It is without smell, without taste, without touch, without form and without sound. It is without decay. Everything flows from it and everything is established in it—prana, apana, *samana, vyana* and *udana*.[88] They flow from it and merge into it again. Prana and apana course around between samana and vyana. When one sleeps, samana and vyana remain absorbed. Udana remains pervaded in the space between apana and prana. Thus, even when a man sleeps, prana and apana do not abandon him. The one which controls all the breaths of life is known as udana. Those who know about the brahman and resort to austerities try to control it. In those who possess bodies, all these different breaths of life seek to devour each other. The fire known as Vaishvanara courses in the space between them and it has seven flames. The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, the ears as the fifth, the mind and intelligence as the seventh—these are the seven tongues and flames of Vaishvanara. That which is smelt, that which is drunk, that which is touched, that which is heard, that which is thought and that which is undertood—for me, these are the seven kinds of kindling. The one who

smells, the one who eats, the one who sees, the one who touches, the one who hears as the fifth, the one who thinks and the one who understands—these are the seven supreme officiating priests. There are seven kinds of oblations, seven kinds of fires and seven kinds of officiating priests. Learned ones who know about the respective wombs from which the kindling are generated offer the oblations properly. The earth, the wind, space, water, light as the fifth, the mind and intelligence—these are said to be the seven wombs. All the qualities of the oblations enter into the mouth of what results from the fire. Having spent time inside, they are again reborn in their respective wombs. They are the origin of creatures.[89] However, at the time of destruction, they remain restrained. Smell is born from that.[90] Taste is born from that. Form is born from that. Touch is born from that. Sound is born from that. Doubt is born from that. Faith is born from that. The learned know that these are the seven kinds of creation. These were the methods that were grasped by the ancient ones. The complete offering of oblations makes them full and also fills them with energy.’”’

## Chapter 1856(21)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘In this connection, there is an ancient history. Listen to the ordinances for the ten officiating priests.[91] Know everything about this. Consider the consciousness with the tool of knowledge. Know that all those who bear bodies sustain their bodily forms with the aid of semen. The *garhapatya* fire is said to be the sustainer of the body. The *ahavaniya* fire is the one into which oblations are offered.[92] Word was born from that and also the source from which words are pronounced. Form manifested itself from that and began to follow the mind.’

‘“The brahmani asked, ‘Why did word originate first and why was mind created afterwards? Words are seen to be pronounced after they have been thought of by the mind. Through what knowledge and what yoga can one say that intelligence is based on consciousness? When it is raised up, why can’t it follow? What restrains it?’[93]

‘“The brahmana replied, ‘Apana is the lord. Therefore, it is the one that despatches everything. It is said to control the mind and mind controls intelligence. However, you have asked me a question about word and the mind. Therefore, I will recount to you a rivalry that took place between them. Both word and mind went to the jivatman and asked a question. “O lord! Dispel a doubt that exists in our minds. Which among us is superior? Tell us.” The illustrious one told the goddess of speech, “The mind is superior.” However, word responded, “I am the one who leads to the accomplishment of desire.” Know that I have two kinds of minds, mobile and immobile.[94] The immobile is with me and the mobile is your dominion. That in your dominion depends on mantras, syllables and sound. Therefore, the mind that is immobile is superior.[95] O beautiful one![96] However, you came to me of your own accord and spoke to me. O Sarasvati! Therefore, I pronounce your name. O goddess! You are always based in speech, in the space between prana and apana. O immensely fortunate one! However, in prana’s absence, you rushed towards Prajapati and asked the illustrious one to rescue you. At this, prana manifested itself and the word appeared again. That is the reason why, when there is inhalation alone, no words can ever be pronounced. Syllables are always either aspirated or unaspirated. Among these two, the unaspirated ones are superior to the aspirated ones. O one who

speaks about the eternal brahman! You are always excellent, like a cow that yields a large quantity of milk. O Bharati! O one with the beautiful smiles! You are like a cow. You are both divine and not divine in your powers.[97] Behold the subtle difference between these two.'

'"The brahmani asked, 'Earlier, when she wished to speak, but words did not come out, what did the goddess Sarasvati say?'

'"The brahmana replied, 'The body results from prana. Apana follows from prana. It then becomes udana and is released from the body. It then envelopes all the directions with vyana. After that, it remains established in samana. This has been stated earlier. Thus, the immobile mind is superior. And the goddess of speech is superior to the mobile mind.'"'

## Chapter 1857(22)

"'The brahmana said, 'O beautiful one! In this connection, there is an ancient history about the ordinances for the seven officiating priests. The nose, the eyes, the tongue, the skin, the ears as the fifth, the mind and intelligence—these are the seven separate officiating priests. These exist in the subtle intervening space and do not perceive each other. O beautiful one! Given this, know the natures of the seven officiating priests.'

'"The brahmani asked, 'When they exist in the subtle intervening space, why can't they see each other? O illustrious one! O lord! What is their nature? Tell me.'

'"The brahmana replied, 'Not knowing about the qualities is ignorance. Knowing about the qualities is said to be knowledge. They can never know each other's qualities. The tongue, the eyes, the ears, touch and intelligence do not experience smell. It is the nose alone that can experience it. The nose, the eyes, the ears, the skin and intelligence do not experience taste. It is the tongue alone that can experience it. The nose, the tongue, the ears, the skin and intelligence cannot experience form. It is the eyes alone that can experience it. The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the ears, the intelligence and the mind cannot experience touch. It is the skin alone that can experience it. The nose, the tongue, the ears, the touch and intelligence cannot experience sound. It is the ears alone that can experience it. The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin and the ears cannot experience doubt. It is the mind alone that can experience it. The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, the ears and the mind cannot experience devotion. It is intelligence alone that can experience it. O beautiful one! In this connection, there is an ancient history about a conversation between the senses and the mind.

'"'The mind said, "Without me, the nose cannot smell and the tongue does not experience taste. The eyes cannot grasp form and the skin doesn't experience touch. Without me, the ears can never comprehend sound. I am supreme and eternal among all the elements. Without me, the senses are never radiant. They are like an empty house where the flames of the sacrificial fire have been doused. Without me, all the creatures cannot understand the purport of the qualities. Even when they try, the senses are like fuelwood that is wet and is not dry."

'"'The senses responded, "What you think is false. Without us, or the objects of the senses, you cannot enjoy any objects of pleasure. You think that when we are destroyed, you will be content, able to sustain life, able to enjoy objects of pleasure and able to taste. You think that when we are

destroyed, your resolution alone will enable you to remain in those objects and enjoy the objects of pleasure, as they should be enjoyed. You think that you will be successful in enjoying the objects of the senses as you always have, perhaps form through the nose, taste through the eyes, smell through the ears, faith through the tongue, sound through the skin and touch through intelligence. Those who are strong do not follow any rules. Rules are for the weak. Do not experience what you have enjoyed earlier. Experience what you have not enjoyed earlier.[98] To understand the sacred texts, a disciple goes to an instructor. Even after having obtained the sacred texts, he serves the teacher to understand the meaning of the sacred texts. You think that we haven't shown you what exists in the objects, whether it is in sleep or when in a state of waking, whether it is in the past or in the future. There are creatures who are limited in intelligence and who, therefore, seem to have lost their minds. However, it is seen that for sustaining their lives, it is we who discharge their tasks for them. There are many kinds of resolutions that are formed in dreams. However, when afflicted by hunger, one runs after material objects.[99] If one avoids material objects and seeks to enjoy resolutions alone, that is like entering a house without any doors. In that case, one always obtains the peace that comes from the extinguishment of life, like a blazing fire when all the wood has been exhausted. We desire to be attached to our own qualities. We do not desire to be attached to the qualities of another sense. But nothing is experienced without us. Without us, you will not experience any delight."'"'

## Chapter 1858(23)

'"The brahmana said, 'O extremely beautiful one! In this connection, there is an ancient history about the ordinances followed by the five officiating priests. Those who are knowledgable and learned know the supreme—prana, apana, udana, samana and vyana are the five officiating priests.'

'"'The brahmani said, 'Earlier, it was my view that there are seven natural officiating priests. But tell me about the supreme principle, whereby, there are five officiating priests.'

'"'The brahmana replied, 'The breath of life is nurtured by prana and gives birth to apana. The breath of life is nurtured by apana and makes vyana flow. The breath of life is nurtured by vyana and makes udana flow. The breath of life is nurtured by udana and makes samana flow. In earlier times, they went to Prajapati, who was born first, and asked, "Tell us who is the eldest among us. He is the one who will be the foremost."

'"'Brahma responded, "In all creatures that have bodies and are alive, there is a breath of life. When that is destroyed, the creature is destroyed. When it is destroyed, the creature can no longer move. That is the best among you. Now go wherever you wish."

'"'Prana said, "When I am destroyed, the creature also heads towards destruction. Therefore, among all the breaths that sustain life in a body, I am foremost. When I am destroyed, the creature can no longer move. Behold. I am going to destroy myself."'

'"'The brahmana continued, 'Prana was destroyed. But the creature continued to move. O beautiful one! At this, samana and udana spoke up. "You do not pervade everything. You are not established like us. O prana! You are not the foremost. Apana alone is under your control." Prana began to move around again and apana said, "When I am destroyed, the creature also heads towards destruction.

Therefore, among all the breaths that sustain life in a body, I am foremost. When I am destroyed, the creature can no longer move. Behold. I am going to destroy myself." Vyana and udana spoke these words. "O apana! You are not the foremost. Only prana is under your subjugation." Apana began to move again and vyana now said, "I am the foremost among all of us. Listen to the reason. When I am destroyed, the creature also heads towards destruction. Therefore, among all the breaths that sustain life in a body, I am foremost. When I am destroyed, the creature can no longer move. Behold. I am going to destroy myself." Vyana was destroyed. But the creature continued to move. Prana, apana, udana and samana said, "O vyana! You are not the foremost. Samana alone is under your subjugation." Vyana began to move again and samana said, "I am the foremost among all of us. Listen to the reason. When I am destroyed, the creature also heads towards destruction. Therefore, among all the breaths that sustain life in a body, I am foremost. When I am destroyed, the creature can no longer move. Behold. I am going to destroy myself." Samana was destroyed. But the creature continued to move. At this, prana, apana, udana and vyana said, "O samana! You are not the foremost. Vyana alone is under your subjugation." Samana began to move again and udana said, "I am the foremost among all of us. Listen to the reason. When I am destroyed, the creature also heads towards destruction. Therefore, among all the breaths that sustain life in a body, I am foremost. When I am destroyed, the creature can no longer move. Behold. I am going to destroy myself." Udana was destroyed. But the creature continued to move. Prana, apana, samana and vyana said, "O udana! You are not the foremost. Vyana alone is under your subjugation." At this, Brahma Prajapati spoke to the assembled ones. "All of you are foremost. Yet, not a single one is foremost. All of you follow different kinds of dharma. All of you are foremost in your own area. All of you are protected by each other. There are superior five breaths of life. They are both mobile and immobile. My atman is one, but is experienced in many different forms. Be affectionate towards each other and make each other prosper. O fortunate ones! Depart in peace. Sustain each other."'''''

## Chapter 1859(24)

''"The brahmana said, 'In this connection, an ancient history is recounted, about a conversation between Narada and the rishi Devamata.

'''Devamata asked, "When a creature is born, which comes first—prana, apana, samana, vyana or udana?"

'''Narada replied, "When a being is created, it is the other one that comes first.[100] Know that the breath of life has two components—one that moves diagonally and one that moves upwards."

'''Devamata asked, "When a being is created, who creates the other one that comes first? Who determines the two breaths of life, one that moves diagonally and one that moves upwards? Tell me."

'''Narada replied, "Delight is generated from resolution. It[101] is also generated from sound. It is also generated from taste. It is also generated from form. It is also generated from touch. It is also generated from smell. These are the types that result from udana. Delight results from physical intercourse. Semen results from desire. Juices flow from desire.[102] Usually, the mixture of semen and blood results from the union of samana and vyana. When semen and blood are mixed, the first result

is that of prana. When the semen is transformed by prana, apana results. The pair of prana and apana are said to move upwards. The pair of vyana and samana are said to move diagonally. Agni represents all the gods. This is the instruction of the Vedas. This[103] generates knowledge in brahmanas and confers them with intelligence. Smoke is its terrible tamas form, the potent ashes represent rajas. Sattva is generated from it when oblations are offered into it. Those who are learned and knowledgable about sacrifices say that samana and vyana form the foundation. Prana and apana are the offerings of clarified butter and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. I will also tell you about the pairs and what is separate from them. Listen. Day and night are a pair and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. The two *ayanas*[104] constitute a pair and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. Existence and non-existence constitute a pair and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. Good and bad constitute a pair and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. Truth and falsehood constitute a pair and the fire is between them. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana. Samana comes first and the pervasive vyana undertakes its task. The third is the pervasive samana. Vamadeva[105] is for the sake of tranquility. Tranquility is the eternal brahman. Learned brahmanas know that this is the supreme form of udana.”’”’’

## Chapter 1860(25)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘In this connection, there is an ancient history about the ordinances for *chaturhotra*,[106] explaining why the rites are like that. All those ordinances and rites are now being recounted to you. O fortunate one! I will tell you. Listen to this supreme mystery. O beautiful one! The agent, the action, the instrument and emancipation—these are the four officiating priests that envelope the universe. Listen to the means that are used by all these officiating priests. The nose, the tongue, the eyes, the skin, the ears as the fifth, mind and intelligence—these seven are known to be qualities associated with the agent. Smell, taste, form, sound, touch as the fifth, what is thought and what is understood—these seven are qualities associated with the action. The one who smells, the one who eats, the one who sees, the one who touches, the one who hears as the fifth, the one who thinks and the one who understands—these seven are known as qualities associated with the instrument. They possess qualities, good or bad, and are consumed by their own qualities. A person who knows himself to be beyond the seven and devoid of qualities has reason for emancipation. Learned ones know that these qualities occupy their respective places. They are the forms of the gods and always enjoy the oblations. Ignorant ones eat and develop a sense of ownership.[107] Such a person only cooks for himself and is always destroyed by this sense of ownership. He eats what he should not eat and he is also destroyed by the drinking of liquor. He destroys the food he has eaten. Having destroyed the food, he also destroys his sense of knowledge. However, a learned lord eats the food for the sake of being born again. Because of the food he has eaten, there is not the slightest bit of transgression in him. What is thought by the mind, what is spoken in words, what is heard by the ears, what is seen by

the eyes, what is touched by the skin, what is smelt by the ears—all these six are like oblations and must be controlled by the mind. These qualities must be offered to the blazing fire that rages inside the body.[108] This is the sacrifice of yoga that I am engaged in. This knowledge about the brahman emanates from the mind. Prana is the hymn for that sacrifice and apana is the weapon that is used. Renouncing everything is the excellent dakshina. The action and the doer are both the officiating priest with which I praise the beloved brahman. I praise him with the rules of the sacred texts and offer dakshina. Those who know about Naryayana praise him with a hymn from the Rig Veda. "In ancient times, animals were slaughtered in the name of the god Narayana." Hymns chanted from the Sama Veda are also cited as an illustration. O timid one! Listen to me. The god Narayana is the soul of everything.'"'

## Chapter 1861(26)

"'The brahmana said, 'There is one ruler. There is no second ruler. Wherever I am employed, that is where I roam around. The ruler is the being who is lodged in the heart and he rules from there. I am moved by him, like water down a slope. There is one preceptor. There is no second one. He is in the heart and I will speak about him. I am always instructed by that preceptor and all the danavas are defeated because of that. There is one relative. There is no second one. He is in the heart and I will speak about him. It is because of his instructions that relatives behave like relatives and the saptarshis blaze in the seven firmaments. There is one person who hears. There is no second one. He is in the heart and I will speak about him. Having resided with that preceptor in the preceptor's house, Shakra obtained immortality in all the worlds. There is one enemy. There is no second one. Having always been instructed by that preceptor, all the serpents hate the worlds. In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about what Prajapati told the serpents, the gods and the rishis. Seated around Prajapati, the gods, the rishis, the serpents and the asuras asked, "What is best for us? Tell us." Asked about their welfare, the illustrious Brahma only uttered the syllable of "Om". Hearing this, they fled in different directions. Having received what was meant to be an instruction to their own selves, they fled. The attribute of an inclination to bite first emerged among snakes. Asuras developed natural insolence in their conduct. The gods were engaged in giving and the maharshis in self-control. They received the same instruction and the single refined word. However, all the snakes, the gods, the rishis and the danavas developed diverse dispositions. One hears what is spoken only when one receives it in the proper way. This is true even if one asks again. No other preceptor can be thought of.[109] An act is thought of first. It is undertaken subsequently. The preceptor, the one who understands, the enemy and the one who hates are all lodged inside the heart. By undertaking wicked acts in the world, one becomes an evildoer. By undertaking good acts in the world, one becomes a doer of good deeds. If a person is addicted to the pleasure that comes from gratifying the senses, he is driven by desire and his conduct follows desire. A person who follows vows is always engaged in conquering the senses. There may be a person who abandons all vows and deeds and bases himself on the brahman alone. Basing himself on the brahman, he roams around in this world and becomes a brahmachari. The brahman is the kindling. The brahman is the fire. The brahman is the sacrifice. The brahman is the

water. The brahman is the preceptor. He is submerged in the brahman. This is the subtle nature of brahmacharya, understood by those who are learned. Having understood it and instructed by kshetrajna,[110] they follow this.’”’

## Chapter 1862(27)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘I have entered this great forest, having crossed the terrain that is extremely difficult to traverse.[111] It has grief, joy, cold and heat, and these are like gnats and mosquitoes. It is enveloped in the blind darkness of confusion and greed is like predators and reptiles. Possessions are hardships and desire and anger are like bandits along the road.’

‘“The brahmani asked, ‘O immensely wise one! Where is that forest? What are its trees and rivers? What are its hills and mountains? How far away is the forest?’

‘“The brahmana replied, ‘There is nothing that is separate from it. There is nothing that is equal to it. Since there is nothing that is separate from it, it is only a short distance away. There is nothing smaller than it. There is nothing larger than it. There is nothing that is more miserable than it. There is nothing that is its equal in happiness. Once brahmanas enter there, they no longer have any reason to grieve or rejoice. They are not frightened of anyone. Nor does anyone have reason to be frightened of them. There are seven large trees in that forest, seven fruits, seven guests, seven hermitages, seven kinds of meditation and seven different types of initiation.[112] The trees that pervade that forest yield divine flowers and fruits of five colours. The trees that pervade that forest yield divine flowers and fruits that have excellent colours. The trees that pervade that forest yield divine flowers and fruits that have four colours. The trees that pervade that forest yield flowers and fruits that have mixed and three colours. The trees that pervade that forest yield flowers and fruits that are fragrant and have a single colour. The giant trees that pervade that forest yield flowers and fruits that have many colours that are not manifest. For a brahmana with an excellent mind, there is a single fire there. The five senses are the kindling. For the sake of emancipation, there are seven kinds of initiation. The qualities are the fruits and the guests survive on those fruits. The seven maharshis become the guests there. When they have been honoured and disappear, another beautiful forest manifests itself. Resolution is that tree, full of shade. Tranquility is its fruit. Knowledge is the resort and contentment is the water. Beyond all this, the kshetrajna is the sun. Virtuous ones who go there, never have to suffer from fear again. Whether upwards, diagonally or downwards, the extremeties of that tree cannot be discerned. Seven women always dwell there. Their visages face downwards and they are radiant mothers. From above, they provide juices to the subjects. In every other way, they are all transient. The seven successful saptarshis, with Vasishtha as the foremost, are established there and repeatedly emerge from there. Fame, radiance, power, victory, success and energy—these always follow those seven, who are like radiant stellar bodies. Collected together, there are hills and mountains there. There are rivers and streams that bear water, all originating with Brahma. There is a sacred sacrificial ground at the confluence of the rivers. There, those who are content in their own atmans advance towards the grandfather himself. Their desires have been extinguished. They are excellent in their vows. They have burnt their sins through austerities. They enter the atman in their

own selves and worship the brahman. People who know about that forest of knowledge praise it with hymns from the Rig Veda. For those who intend that forest, patience is generated. Learned brahmanas instruct us about that divine forest in this way. Having obtained the knowledge, they follow the instructions of the kshetrajna.’”’

## Chapter 1863(28)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘I do not smell scents. I do not know taste. I do not see form. I do not touch. I do not hear different kinds of sound. I do not entertain the slightest bit of resolution. It is nature that desires agreeable objects. It is nature that dislikes disagreeable objects. Like prana and apana when they enter the bodies of living creatures, it is nature that experiences desire and hatred. There are other sentiments that are permanent. The atman in creatures does not discern them in the body. When I am based there,[113] I am capable of being distracted by desire, anger, old age and death. I do not desire all the objects of desire. I do not hate all the sins. There is no taint in my nature, like a drop of water is not left on a lotus. When one glances at many kinds of nature, the eternal is everlasting. The net of enjoyment is no longer attached to deeds, just as the blazing rays of the sun are not attached to the firmament. In this connection, there is an ancient history about a conversation between an officiating priest[114] and a mendicant. O illustrious one! Listen to it. On seeing an animal prepared for a sacrificial rite, a mendicant censured the violence and spoke to an officiating priest who was seated there. The officiating priest replied, “This goat will not be destroyed. If the sacred texts are right, this animal will obtain great benefit. This part, constituted of earth, will enter the earth. This part, constituted of water, will enter the water. The eyes will enter the sun. The ears will enter the directions. The breath of life will enter the firmament. I follow the sacred texts and there is no sin in this.” ‘“‘The mendicant said, “If you perceive a benefit from the sacrifice of the goat, then the sacrifice is for the sake of the goat. Why does the sacrifice need you? Take the permission of the goat’s mother, father, brother and friends and let them pronounce the mantras. In particular, the goat depends on them. You should ask them and obtain their consent. It is only after their permission has been obtained that one can think about what should be done. The life-breath of the goat has left[115] and returned to its own origin. It is my view that only the immobile body is left. This body, bereft of senses, is like kindling. Those whose desire is addicted to violence have thought of this as an animal and have reduced it to kindling. Non-violence is the ancient instruction of all dharmas. I know that a rite is indeed a rite if it does not involve any violence. I have a pledge of non-violence. If I wish to say anything beyond this, I am capable of saying many things. Your deed is reprehensible. All of us always find delight in non-violence towards all beings. We see this directly manifest. We do not worship what is indirect.”

‘“‘The officiating priest replied, “You enjoy the qualities of smell that belong to the earth. You drink and taste the quality of the water. You see form, the quality of fire. You touch the quality of the wind. You hear sound, which originates in space. You use your mind to think of different things. You think that all these elements have life. You are always engaged in taking away life. You are engaged in violence. There is no endeavour without violence. O brahmana! What do you think?”

‘“‘The mendicant said, “The indestructible and the destructible are the two opposite aspects of the soul. The indestructible is existence. The destructible is said to be non-existent nature. Life, the tongue, the mind, the spirit, sattva and rajas are part of nature. When one has been freed from the opposite pairs of sentiments, one is without hope. Such a person looks upon all creatures impartially. He has no sense of ownership and has conquered his atman. When one has been freed in every possible way, there no longer is any fear.”

‘“‘The officiating priest replied, “O supreme among intelligent ones! One should always reside with those who are virtuous. Hearing your views, my intelligence has been illuminated. O illustrious one! Realizing that you were an enlightened one, I spoke to you in this way. O brahmana! I showed honour to the customs in performing this sacrifice. No crime attaches to me because of this sacrifice.”’

‘“The brahmana continued, ‘When this was said, the mendicant remained silent. The officiating priest was freed from his confusion. He engaged in the supreme rite of the great sacrifice. In this way, learned brahmanas know about the extremely subtle nature of moksha. They know and follow the instructions of kshetrajna.’”’

## Chapter 1864(29)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘O beautiful one! In this connection, there is an ancient history about a conversation between Kartavirya and the ocean. There was a king named Kartavirya Arjuna and he possessed one thousand arms. Using his bow, he conquered the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. We have heard that on one occasion, intoxicated with his strength, on the shores of the ocean, he enveloped the ocean with hundreds of arrows. The ocean joined its hands in salutation and bowed down before him. “O brave one! Do not shoot iron arrows at me. What can I do for you? O tiger among kings! The creatures that have sought refuge with me are being slaughtered by the great arrows you have released. O lord! Grant them freedom from fear.”

‘“‘Arjuna replied, “If there is any archer who is equal to me in battle, tell me about him, so that I can face him in an encounter.”

‘“‘The ocean said, “O king! You may have heard of maharshi Jamadagni. As you have said, he is capable of receiving you as a guest.”””[116]

‘“The brahmana continued, ‘At this, the king was overcome by great rage. He left for the hermitage and confronted Rama. With his relatives, he engaged in hostilities against Rama and this caused stress to the great-souled Rama. O lotus-eyed one! The infinitely energetic Rama’s energy blazed forth and he burnt down the enemy soldiers. Rama violently grasped a battleaxe and sliced down the thousand arms, like lopping off the branches from a tree. When they saw that he had been slain, all the relatives assembled together. They surrounded Bhargava and attacked him with their spears. Rama seized his bow and swiftly ascended a chariot. He released a shower of arrows and killed the king’s soldiers. Some of the kshatriyas were slain by Jamadagni’s son. Others entered fortifications in the mountains, like deer afflicted by a lion. Because of their fear, some of them could not find brahmanas and could not engage in their own rites. Their offspring became vrishalas.[117] In this way, Dramidas, Kashas,

Pundras and Shabaras were uprooted from the dharma of kshatriyas and became vrishalas. When the brave ones were slain, the brahmanas obtained sons through the kshatriya women.[118] However, Jamadagni's son repeatedly killed these kshatriyas. When this had happened twenty-one times, an invisible and divine voice spoke gentle words and these were heard by all the worlds. "O Rama! Desist. O son![119] O Rama! What gain do you see in this? Why are you repeatedly depriving the relatives of the kshatriyas of their lives?" His great-souled and immensely fortunate ancestors, with Richika at the forefront, asked him to desist. However, unable to tolerate his father's death, Rama told those rishis, "You should not restrain me in this way." The ancestors replied, "O supreme among victorious ones! You should not kill the relatives of the kshatriyas in this way. You are a brahmana. You should not kill these kings."'"'

## Chapter 1865(30)

'"The ancestors said, "In this connection, an ancient history is recounted. O supreme among brahmanas! Having heard the truth about this, decide on your course of action. There was a rajarshi named Alarka and he was extremely great in his austerities. He was knowledgable about dharma and devoted to the truth. He was great-souled and extremely great in his vows. Seizing his bow, he conquered the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. Having performed this extremely difficult task, his mind turned towards what was subtle. He sat down at the foot of a tree. O immensely intelligent one! Forgetting that extremely large kingdom, his thoughts turned towards what was subtle.

'"'"Alarka said, 'Strength has been generated in my mind. When one conquers the mind, victory is certain. Elsewhere, when surrounded by enemies, I shot arrows. If my mind assumes a fickle form and tries to distract me in every possible way, I will unleash extremely sharp-pointed arrows towards it.'

'"'"The mind replied, 'O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.'"

'"'The ancestors continued, "Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

'"'"Alarka said, 'I inhale many kinds of smells and receive them. Therefore, I will release sharp arrows towards my nose.'

'"'"The nose replied, 'O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.'"

'"'The ancestors continued, "Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

'"'"Alarka said, 'I enjoy many kinds of tastes and receive them. Therefore, I will release sharp arrows towards my tongue.'

'"'"The tongue replied, 'O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.'"

'"'The ancestors continued, "Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

‘“‘“Alarka said, ‘I touch with my skin and receive the sensation of touch. Therefore, I will bring the skin down with many arrows shafted with the feathers of herons.’

‘“‘“The skin replied, ‘O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.’”

‘“‘The ancestors continued, “Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

‘“‘“Alarka said, ‘I hear many kinds of sound and receive them. Therefore, I will release sharp arrows towards my ears.’

‘“‘“The ears replied, ‘O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.’”

‘“‘The ancestors continued, “Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

‘“‘“Alarka said, ‘I see many kinds of attributes and receive them. Therefore, I will release sharp arrows towards my eyes.’

‘“‘“The eyes replied, ‘O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die. Consider other arrows with which you can strike at me.’”

‘“‘The ancestors continued, “Hearing these words, he thought and spoke these words.

‘“‘“Alarka said, ‘There are many kinds of devotion, but wisdom constraints them. Therefore, I will release sharp arrows towards my intelligence.’

‘“‘“The intelligence replied, ‘O Alarka! Those arrows will never be able to pierce me. They will pierce your inner organs instead. With your inner organs pierced, you will die.’”

‘“‘The ancestors continued, “At this, Alarka engaged in terrible, supreme and extremely difficult austerities. However, he was unable to touch those seven[120] with his arrows. The lord controlled himself and began to think. O supreme among brahmanas! Alarka thought for a long time. The supreme among intelligent ones could not think of anything that was better than, and superior to, yoga. Single-minded and without moving, he resorted to yoga. Using a single arrow, the valiant one quickly slew his senses. Immersing his atman in yoga, he obtained supreme success. Astounded, the rajarshi chanted this song. ‘Alas! It was a hardship that I formerly served the kingdom. I only got to know later that yoga brings supreme bliss.’ O Rama! You should also know this. Do not kill the kshatriyas. If you wish what is beneficial for you, engage in terrible austerities.”’

‘“The brahmana continued, ‘Having been thus addressed by his ancestors, Jamadagni’s son engaged in terrible austerities. Having resorted to those, the immensely fortunate one obtained success that is extremely difficult to obtain.’”’

## Chapter 1866(31)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘There are said to be three enemies and nine qualities in the world. Delight, stupefaction and pride—these are the qualities of sattva. Sorrow, anger and extreme intolerance—these are said to be the qualities of rajas. Sleep, lassitude and confusion—these are the

qualities of tamas. An intelligent person does not waver and cuts these off with large numbers of arrows. He is tranquil in his soul and conquers his senses. He is interested in vanquishing the enemy.[121] Those who know about the ancient accounts recite a chant in this connection. When he ruled the kingdom, this was sung by King Ambarisha. It has been heard that Ambarisha swiftly seized the kingdom, after using virtue to slay the rising tide of vices. He subdued the great vices and honoured the virtuous. He obtained great success and chanted this song. "I have conquered many vices. I have slain all the enemies. However, there is one vice that should have been killed. I have not been able to slay it. As long as a creature is afflicted by this, it does not obtain freedom from desire. Driven by desire, one dashes downwards and does not understand. Because a man is addicted to this, he commits acts that should not be undertaken. Greed must be severed with an extremely sharp sword. It should be sliced off. Desire results from greed and that gives rise to anxiety. A person who desires obtains many qualities that are associated with rajas. Because of these qualities, he is tied down to the bondage of the body. He is repeatedly born, to perform deeds in this world. When life is over and the body is mangled and scattered, he again confronts death because of the act of being reborn. Therefore, one must look towards greed properly. If one desires true sovereignty, one must restrain it with the fortitude of the atman. This is the true kingdom. A king should know that this alone is what needs to be conquered." The illustrious King Ambarisha sung this chant. Having severed greed, he placed this sovereignty at the forefront.'"'

## Chapter 1867(32)

"'The brahmana said, 'O beautiful one! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about a conversation between a brahmana and Janaka. A brahmana committed a crime. Wishing to punish him, King Janaka said, "You will not reside in my kingdom." Thus addressed, the brahmana replied to the best of kings. "O king! Tell me. Which is the kingdom that is under your subjugation? O lord! I wish to dwell in the territory of another king. O lord of the earth! I wish to act in accordance with the words of the sacred texts." Thus addressed by the illustrious brahmana, the king sighed repeatedly and did not say anything in reply. The infinitely energetic king sat down and thought. He was suddenly immersed in great lassitude, like the sun devoured by a planet.[122] After some time, the king reassured himself and overcame that lassitude. He spoke these words to the brahmana. "There is the ancestral kingdom of my forefathers. There are the habitations. I thought of the entire earth. None of this is under my subjugation. When I couldn't find such a place on earth, I searched for such a place in Mithila. When I couldn't find such a place there, I searched for it among my own offspring. When I couldn't find such a place even there, I was overcome by lassitude. With that lassitude over, my intelligence has been aroused again. I think that nothing is under my subjugation and everything is under my subjugation. My atman is not my own. Yet, this entire earth belongs to me. Dwell here as long as you want. Enjoy it as long as you wish." The brahmana replied, "This kingdom of your forefathers and these habitations are under your subjugation. But tell me this. Have you resorted to your intelligence and given up a sense of ownership? On the basis of what intelligence have you determined that everything is under your subjugation? Why is nothing under your subjugation? And

why is everything under your subjugation?”

‘“‘Janaka said, “I have realized that all the deeds that are started in this world come to an end. Therefore, I could not think of anything that belongs to me. Whom does this belong to? Who is the owner? These are the words of the Vedas. Using my intelligence, I could not determine what belongs to me. Having resorted to this intelligence, I gave up all sense of ownership. Listen to the intelligence whereby I decided that everything belongs to me. For my own sake, I do not desire the scents that are received by my nose. It has been conquered by me and therefore, the earth is always under my subjugation.[123] For my own sake, I do not desire what is savoured by my tongue. It has been conquered by me and therefore, the water is always under my subjugation. For my own sake, I do not desire the form and light received by my eyes. It has been conquered by me and therefore, the fire is always under my subjugation. For my own sake, I do not desire what is touched by my skin. It has been conquered by me and therefore, the wind is always under my subjugation. For my own sake, I do not desire the sound that is received by my ears. It has been conquered by me and therefore, sound is always under my subjugation. For my own sake, I never desire my mind or what is in my mind. It has been conquered by me and therefore, the mind is always under my subjugation. All the acts that I start are for the gods, the ancestors, the elements and the guests.”’

‘“The brahmana continued, ‘At this, the brahmana replied and again spoke to Janaka. “Know that I am Dharma. I have arrived here now to test you. Set in motion the wheel that does not return. Its circumference is sattva, the brahman is the nave and intelligence constitutes the spokes.”’”’

## Chapter 1868(33)

‘“The brahmana said, ‘O timid one! You have censured me according to your intelligence. But I do not roam around in the world in that way. I am a brahmana. I am free. I dwell in the forest. Despite resorting to the dharma of being a householder, I am a brahmachari. O beautiful one! I am not what you see with your eyes. Everything in this universe that has come and gone is pervaded by me. Know me to be the one that destroys every object in this world, mobile and immobile, like fire consumes wood. I know that my intelligence is superior to sovereignty over everything on earth and even that in heaven. That intelligence is my wealth.[124] This is the single path that is traversed by all brahmanas. Whether they are in households, reside in forests, dwell in the houses of their preceptors or are mendicants, irrespective of the many kinds of signs they displace, they use their intelligence to worship only this. They may resort to many kinds of signs, but the intelligence is based on tranquility in the soul. The destination is a single one, like that of rivers heading to the ocean. That path is traversed through intelligence. It is not a path that is traversed by the body. All action has a beginning and an end and the body is bound down by action. O extremely beautiful one! Therefore, you should not entertain any fear about the life hereafter. Be devoted to me[125] and it is into me that your atman will merge.’”’

## Chapter 1869(34)

‘“The brahmani replied, ‘A person who is limited in his intelligence or has not cleansed his soul is incapable of comprehending this. My intelligence is extremely fickle, limited and diffused. Tell me a means whereby I can obtain intelligence. I wish to learn from you the source from which this knowledge emanates.’

‘“The brahmana said, ‘Knowledge of the brahman is the lower *arani* and the preceptor is the upper arani.[126] Austerities and the sacred texts provide the friction and this leads to the fire of knowledge being generated.’

‘“The brahmani asked, ‘Kshetrajna is said to be a sign of the brahman. What are its signs? How is one capable of grasping it?’

‘“The brahmana said, ‘He[127] is without signs and without qualities. There is nothing that is his origin. I will tell you about the methods whereby he can be grasped, or not be grasped. I will instruct you about a proper method, like the one that is seen in bees.[128] The signs are that intelligence must determine action and knowledge must determine intelligence. In instructions about moksha, it is not said that this must be done, or that must not be done. Through hearing and sight, intelligence is generated in the atman.[129] As long as one is capable of doing this, one must contemplate hundreds and thousands of manifest and unmanifest forms. There are many kinds of yoga and all of these directly provide the means. Through practice, one obtains the supreme, beyond which, nothing exists.’”

‘Vasudeva said, “At this, the brahmani’s intelligence became such that the kshetrajna was destroyed.[130] Having obtained what is beyond kshetrajna, it became other than the kshetrajna.”

‘Arjuna asked, “O Krishna! Where is that brahmani and where is that bull among brahmanas? They obtained success. O undecaying one! Tell me about them.”

‘Vasudeva replied, “Know that my mind is that brahmana. Know that my intelligence is that brahmani. O Dhananjaya! The one who has been spoken of as kshetrajna is I.”’

## Chapter 1870(35)

‘Arjuna said, “The brahman is the supreme object of knowledge and you should explain this to me. Through your favours, my mind finds pleasure in these subtle aspects.”

‘Vasudeva replied, “In this connection, an ancient history is cited about a conversation between a disciple and a preceptor on the question of moksha. O scorcher of enemies! There was a brahmana preceptor who was rigid in his vows. While he was seated, his intelligent disciple asked him, ‘O illustrious one! Desiring supreme benefit, I am seeking refuge with you. What is supremely beneficial? O brahmana! I have bowed down my head and am soliciting you. Tell me and instruct me.’ O Partha! The preceptor replied to the disciple. ‘O brahmana! I will explain whatever you have doubts about.’ O best among the Kuru lineage! The one who was devoted to his preceptor was thus addressed by the preceptor. He joined his hands in salutation and asked. O immensely intelligent one! Listen to this.

‘“The disciple asked, ‘Where have I come from? Where have you come from? Tell me about the supreme truth. From where do mobile and immobile creatures originate? How do creatures remain

alive? What is their lifespan? O brahmana! What is truth? What are austerities? What are the qualities of those who are virtuous? What are auspicious paths? What is happiness? What are wicked deeds? O illustrious one! O excellent one! O brahmana rishi! There is no one other than you who knows the truth about these questions and you should tell me the truth.'"

'Vasudeva continued, "The disciple asked humbly, in the proper way. He was tranquil and possessed the qualities. He followed his preceptor like a shadow. He was a self-controlled mendicant who observed brahmacharya. O Partha! He asked these questions. O best among those of the Kuru lineage! O scorcher of enemies! The preceptor, who was intelligent and firm in his vows, answered them properly. 'This was stated by Brahma and is practised by the best of rishis who are devoted to dharma. This constitutes knowledge of the Vedas. It is the truth behind the reason why beings were created. It is a determination about the past, the present and the future and about dharma, kama and artha. This is known to the large number of siddhas. It is eternal and was thought of in ancient times. O immensely wise one! Using proper words, I will now tell you about it. Learned ones who possess this intelligence have success in this world. In earlier times, the rishis wished to ask each other and assembled together —Brihaspati, Bharadvaja, Goutama, Bhargava, Vasishtha, Kashyapa, Vishvamitra and Atri. All of them had traversed along various paths, performing their own rites, and were exhausted. With the aged Angiras leading them, they went to Brahma's abode and saw Brahma, cleansed of sin. He was seated happily and the great-souled maharshis bowed down before him. They humbly asked him about the supreme benefit. What deeds should a virtuous person undertake? How is one freed from sin? What are auspicious paths? What is truth? What is extremely wicked? Which path enables one to obtain greatness? What is the final destruction of beings? What is their creation? The best among sages spoke in this way to the great grandfather. I will tell you what he said. O disciple! Listen to what the sacred texts have to say.

'"'Brahma said, "All mobile and immobile objects are born from the truth. O ones who are excellent in your vows! They live through austerities. It is because of their own deeds that they are again born in their own species. Truth is always united with the qualities and has the five manifestations.[131] The brahman is truth. Austerities are truth. Prajapati is the truth. Creatures are born from the truth. Creatures possess the greatness of truth. That is the reason brahmanas resort to the truth and are always devoted to yoga. They overcome anger and repentance and use dharma as the bridge. There are other learned brahmanas who have laid down the ordinances of dharma. I will tell you about them, the ones who have thought about the eternal worlds. There are four separate varnas and four separate ashramas. Dharma is one. But the learned have always said that it has four components. O brahmanas! I will now tell you about the path that is auspicious and brings benefit. Earlier, learned ones who have thought about the brahman have always traversed along this. Listen to me now. This supreme path is difficult to comprehend. O immensely fortunate ones! Listen to everything about that supreme destination. The first step is said to be the ashrama of brahmacharya. Garhasthya is the second and vanaprastha comes after that. After this, it is known as the supreme step of adhyatma.[132] Light, space , Aditya, Vayu, Indra and Prajapati—these can only be seen as long as one has not attained the state of adhyatma. Listen now to the means of obtaining that state. Sages reside in the forest and subsist on fruits, roots and air. This stage of vanaprastha has been laid down for the first three varnas. Garhasthya is recommended for all the varnas. In this stage, it has been said that

patience and faithfulness are the signs of dharma. These are the paths that are known as *devayana*. The virtuous and the patient use these rites as the bridge of dharma. Other than this, there is another kind of dharma for those who are rigid in their vows. Such people can always visualize the creation and destruction of beings. I will now accurately tell you the truth and the reasons as to why different essences exist separately in objects. Mahat is unmanifest. There is ego. There are eleven senses[133] and the five great elements. The sacred texts of the Vedas have said that the five elements are superior. The attributes are said to be twenty-four.[134] One who understands the truth about this is patient and knows the truth about the creation and destruction of all beings. He is not overcome by confusion. A person who know the exact truth about the attributes and the qualities and everything about the gods, is cleansed of all sin and is freed from his bonds. He obtains all the unblemished worlds.”’”’

## Chapter 1871(36)

‘“Brahma said, “That is unmanifest. It cannot be identified. It pervades everything. It is permanent and does not move. It is known as a city with nine gates, with three qualities and five elements.[135] The mind discriminates inside and pervades the eleven.[136] Intelligence is the supreme lord over these eleven. This is repeatedly nurtured by three flows. These are the *nadis*[137] and the qualities flow along these, known as the qualities of tamas, rajas and sattva. All of these are joined to each other in pairs and obtain support from each other. They find refuge with each other and also follow each other. The three qualities are attached to each other and also to the five elements. Tamas is mixed with sattva. Sattva is mixed with rajas. Other than rajas being mixed with sattva, sattva is also mixed with tamas. When tamas is restrained, rajas flows there. When rajas is restrained, sattva flows there. Among the three qualities, tamas should be known as the night, since it has signs of confusion. It has the attributes of adharma and is always associated with wicked deeds. Rajas is said to progressively stimulate enterprise and action. In all beings, when it flows, its signs are generation. Radiance, dexterity and faith—in all beings, these are seen to be the forms of sattva and dexterity is respected by the virtuous. I will now tell you about the nature of these qualities and their reasons. Understand from me the truth about these qualities, individually and collectively. Confusion, ignorance, lack of detachment, inability to take a decision about acting, sleep, insolence, fear, greed, sorrow, censure of good acts, lack of memory, distress, lack of belief, perverse conduct, lack of discrimination, blindness, vileness in conduct, boasting about action even when no action has been performed, belief in knowledge despite being ignorant, lack of friendliness, contrary action, lack of faith, stupidity in beliefs, crookedness, lack of sense, wicked sentiments in action, heaviness, despondency, darkness and degradation—brahmanas recount these as the qualities of tamas. There are other sentiments that constrain one in this world, laced with signs of confusion. Wherever they cause those constraints, those are the qualities of tamas. Such people always censure the gods, brahmanas and the Vedas. Attachment, insolence, confusion, anger, lack of forgiveness and malice towards creatures—such conduct has the attributes of tamas. People begin futile tasks. They donate in vain. They eat in vain. Such conduct has the attributes of tamas. Speaking a lot, lack of patience, jealousy, pride, lack of faith—such conduct has the attributes of tamas. There are men in this world who

perpetrate such wicked deeds. They break the ordinances. All such people are tamas. Their sentiments lead them downwards and they are born as inferior species. They become immobile objects, animals, beasts of burden, predatory beasts, snakes, worms, insects, birds, creatures born from eggs, all the other kinds of quadrupeds, or those who are mad, deaf and dumb, or those who suffer from other vile diseases. Because of the consequences of their deeds, these evildoers are immersed in tamas. Their course is downwards. From one kind of tamas, they submerge into greater tamas. I will next tell you what such people can do for their benefit. Through such means, they become the performers of auspicious deeds and can obtain worlds meant for the virtuous. Those born as inferior species should be engaged in their own deeds, bring pleasure to brahmanas and take part in their rites.[138] If one endeavors to ensure this process of cleansing, one ascends to superior worlds. It is even possible to be with the gods in heaven. This is what is said in the sacred texts of the Vedas. Those born as inferior species should be engaged in their own deeds. Thereby, they become human, though they have to be born again. They obtain inferior births, like those of chandalas. Or they are dumb, or stammer. However, progressively, they obtain better and better varnas. They transcend birth as a shudra and other qualities of tamas. But those who indulge in the qualities of tamas continue to remain submerged in that flow. The attachment to desire is said to be a great delusion. Desiring happiness, even rishis, sages and gods become confused. Darkness, confusion, great confusion, the darkness known as anger, death and blinding ignorance—of these, the darkness of rage is said to be the worst. O brahmanas! I have recounted to you the truth about different kinds of birth. I have also told you everything about tamas. Who is the virtuous one who understands it? Who is the virtuous one who sees it? Taking falsehood to be the truth is indeed a characteristic of tamas. The qualities of tamas have been recounted in many ways. I have also told you about what is superior to tamas. A man who knows these qualities will always be freed from all the qualities of tamas.”’”’

## Chapter 1872(37)

‘“Brahma said, “O excellent ones! I will tell you the truth about rajas. O immensely fortunate ones! Listen to everything about the qualities in this kind of conduct. O brahmanas! Conflict, beauty, effort, happiness, unhappiness, cold, heat, prosperity, war, peace, debates, discontent, forgiveness, strength, valour, ego, anger, physical exertion, dissension, jealousy, calumny, battles, sense of ownership, protection, slaughter, imprisonment, hardships, buying, selling, slicing off, piercing, severing, mangling, fierceness, terror, violence, earning a living through the wealth of others, thinking of worldly affairs, anxiety, intolerance in speech, false speech, false gifts, hesitation in speech, censure, worship, praise, influence, contentment, being served, serving, obedience, thirst, being self-centred, separation, bad policy, distraction, repentance, receiving, the separate sacraments that are prescribed in the world for men, women, animals, objects and houses, torment, lack of confidence, rites, rituals, incessant gifts for benedictions, svadha, bowing down, svaha, vashatkara, performing sacrifices, studying, receiving gifts, attachment that is generated for various qualities, treachery, deception, dishonour, honour, theft, injury, slander, torment, wakefulness, vanity, insolence, attachment, devotion, joy, delight, gambling, scandal, alliances with women, attachment to

dancing, musical instruments and singing—these are said to be the qualities associated with rajas. There are those who think about the past, the present and the future. They are always devoted to the three objectives of dharma, artha and kama. They act because they find delight in desire and in the successful obtaining of all the objects of desire. Since their energy is enveloped in rajas, they head downwards. They find pleasure in this world and are repeatedly born again. They desire what can be obtained in this world and in the world after death. They give and they receive. They meditate and offer oblations. The qualities of rajas have been recounted in many ways. The conduct that follows this quality has also been described. A man who always understands these qualities is freed from all the qualities that are associated with rajas.”’”’

## Chapter 1873(38)

‘“‘Brahma said, “After this, I will tell you about the third and supreme quality. This is beneficial for all creatures in this world. This is the unblemished dharma followed by the virtuous. Joy, happiness, lack of terror, enlightenment, bliss, lack of niggardliness, lack of insolence, contentment, devotion, forgiveness, fortitude, lack of violence, impartiality, truthfulness, uprightness, lack of anger, lack of malice, purity, skill, valour—those who follow these in the practice of dharma, obtain the infinite in the world hereafter. Engaged in yoga, they think that knowledge, conduct, service and effort are futile. Such a person has no sense of ownership. He is without ego and without hope. He looks upon everyone equally. He is free from desire. This is the eternal dharma followed by the virtuous. Confidence, modesty, patience, renunciation, purity, constancy, lack of violence, lack of delusion, compassion, lack of injury towards creatures, joy, contentment, wonder, humility, good conduct, tranquility and purity in deeds, auspicious intelligence, liberation, indifference, brahmacharya, detachment in every way, lack of ownership, lack of hope and being surrounded by dharma—these are their traits. Such a person thinks donations, sacrifices, studies, vows, receiving gifts, dharma and austerities to be futile.[139] There are some people who have sought refuge in satva and follow this kind of conduct. These brahmanas are patient, virtuous in their insight and are situated in Brahma’s womb. They have abandoned all kinds of sin. They are without grief. They are beyond old age. They are immortal. The patient ones who act in this way obtain heaven. Through their minds, they possess the powers of lordship, subjugation and lightness.[140] Those great-souled ones behave like the gods in heaven. They are said to move upwards and like the gods, can create. Having reached heaven, they can use their natures to modify everything. They obtain everything that they desire and enjoy these. O bulls among brahmanas! I have thus told you about sattva conduct. If one understands this in the proper way, one can obtain whatever one wishes. The qualities of sattva have specially been recounted. The conduct associated with these qualities has also been described. A man who always knows these qualities enjoys these qualities. But the qualities do not enjoy him.”’”’[141]

## Chapter 1874(39)

‘‘‘Brahma said, “One is incapable of speaking about all the qualities separately. Rajas, sattva and tamas are seen to be together. They are attached to each other and depend on each other. All of them seek refuge with each other and follow each other. There is no doubt that where there is sattva, tamas also proliferates. It is said that as long as tamas and sattva exist, rajas also coexists. They progress together along the path. They combine and adhere to each other. Their conduct is also collective, sometimes with reason, sometimes without reason. However, even when they follow each other, the outcomes may be different. Collectively, they can progress in a superior way and also in an inferior way. When there is an excess of tamas, the progress is downwards. A little bit of rajas will be discerned there and sattva will be lesser still. When there is an excess of rajas, the progress is then medium. A little bit of tamas will be discerned there and sattva will be lesser still. When there is an excess of sattva, the progress is upwards. A little bit of rajas will be discerned there and tamas will be lesser still. Sattva is the origin for any transformation of the senses. There is no other attribute that is superior to sattva. The progress of sattva is upwards, that of rajas is medium. People who have tamas possess inferior qualities and progress downwards. The three qualities course in the three varnas—tamas in shudras, rajas in kshatriyas and the excellent sattva in brahmanas. Even from a distance,[142] they are seen to exist together and collectively. We have not heard of tamas, sattva or rajas existing separately. When they see the sun rising, wicked thieves suffer from fear. Those who are below are tormented. They are afflicted by thirst and suffer from hardships. The rising sun is like sattva. Wicked thieves are tamas. The heat that torments those who are below is said to be the quality of rajas. The radiance in the sun is sattva. The torment is the quality of rajas. The invasion on the right day is known as the quality of tamas.[143] In this way, all the three qualities exist in luminous bodies. In due course, they manifest themselves, here and there. Even in immobile objects, tamas leads to an inferior state. Rajas and sattva also exist in the oils. Know that the day has three parts. The night has also been divided into three parts. There are months, fortnights, years, seasons and the intervals that join these. Three kinds of gifts can be given. Three kinds of sacrifices can be undertaken. There are three worlds. There are three Vedas. There are three kinds of knowledge. There are three destinations. The past, the present and the future exist. Dharma, artha and kama exist. The three qualities are also there in prana, apana and udana. Everything that exists in the world has three components. The three qualities always exist in unmanifest form. The creation of the three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas, is eternal. The eternal and ever-lasting origin is unmanifest and represents tamas. This is auspicious and without birth. There are also Prakriti, transformation, destruction, Pradhana and creation. These cannot be discerned. But they are indeed certain and fixed. Everything that is manifest and unmanifest is said to possess the three qualities. A man who thinks about adhyatma must know these names and meditate about them. Such a person will know the names and the truth about the qualities of the unmanifest. He will know about all the destinations. He will know the truth about the different kinds of divisions and will be freed from his body. He will be liberated from all the qualities and be without disease.”’’’

## Chapter 1875(40)

‘‘‘Brahma said, “From the unmanifest, the immensely intelligent Mahat was generated first. This is the origin of all the qualities and is known as the first creation. Mahat is also known as the great soul, intelligence, Vishnu, Vishva, the valiant Shambhu, understanding, wisdom, realization, fame, fortitude and memory. Progressively, Mahat is thought of in these different words. A learned brahmana who knows this is not immersed in confusion. His arms and feet are in every direction. His eyes, heads and faces are in every direction. His ears are everywhere in the worlds. He is established, pervading everything. With the attributes of greatness, power and radiance, Purusha is based in the heart of everything. He is the lord of being minute, being light and obtaining everything.[144] He is resplendent and without decay. There are intelligent people in the world who are devoted to renunciation. They meditate and always immerse themselves in yoga. They are devoted to the truth and conquer their senses. They are learned, without greed and have conquered anger. They are patient and cheerful in their minds. They are without a sense of ownership and without a sense of ego. They are free in every possible way and obtain Mahat. Those who perceive Mahat in their own atmans go to the supreme and auspicious destination. Among all the people, they are patient and are not submerged in confusion. Svayambhu Vishnu is himself the lord of that first creation. This is the ancient lord, Purusha. He is hidden in a cave and the universe is his form. He is golden and is the supreme destination for those who are intelligent. A person who knows him is intelligent and obtains an understanding that is greater than all kinds of intelligence.”’”’

## Chapter 1876(41)

‘‘‘Brahma said, “Mahat originated first and then came Ahamkara.[145] The sense of ‘I am’ originated and is known as the second creation. It is said that Ahamkara is the reason behind the creation of beings. Prajapati is the essence of energy and consciousness behind the creation of subjects. He is the god who is the creator of the gods through his mental powers. He is the creator of the three worlds. This is said to be the sense of ego, ‘I am all this.’ There are sages who have cleansed their souls and are always devoted to the knowledge of adhyatma. They have obtained success and the eternal worlds through studying and sacrifices. The qualities are attached to the sense of Ahamkara. It is in this way that the creator of beings creates all creatures. It is this that causes all the transformations and all movement. It is through his own energy that he illuminates the universe.”’”’

## Chapter 1877(42)

‘‘‘Brahma said, “The five great elements were generated from Ahamkara—earth, air, space, water and light as the fifth. All beings are confused because of these five great elements, through the action of sound, touch, form, taste and smell. When the five great elements are destroyed, there is universal destruction. O patient ones! There is great fear to all those who sustain life. Every creature is dissolved into its source of origin. That dissolution occurs in an order that is the reverse of the progress of creation. All mobile and immobile objects face destruction. However, those who

are learned and patient are never destroyed. Sound, touch, form, taste and smell as the fifth are the effects. Because of confusion, they are thought of as the cause. They are not different from each other. But they are created in that way because of greed. In the mixture of flesh and blood, they draw sustenance from each other. They are external to the atman. They cause distress and miserable conduct. Prana, apana, udana, samana and vyana are also like that. These five kinds of breaths of life are always attached to the inner atman. Together with speech, mind and intelligence, these eight are the soul of the universe. There may be a person who is controlled in skin, nose, ears, eyes, tongue and speech. His mind is pure and his intelligence does not stray from the course. His mind is never consumed by these eight fires. Such a person obtains the auspicious brahman and nothing is superior to that. In particular, there are said to be even senses. These originate in Ahamkara. O brahmanas! I will recount these. These are the ears, the skin, the eyes, the tongue, the nose as the fifth, the feet, the anus, the gential organ, the hands and speech as the tenth. In this aggregate of senses, mind is the eleventh. When this aggregate is conquered, it is only then that the brahman is manifested. Five of these are said to be organs of sense and five are organs of action. It is the truth that the five that begin with the ears are said to be the organs of sensation. The remaining ones are the organs of action. The mind is classified as both.[146] Intelligence is the twelfth. In due order, I have thus recounted the eleven organs of sense. Learned ones who know this think that they have become successful. There are three states of beings, land, water and sky. There is no fourth state. There are four kinds of birth—from eggs, upwards,[147] from sweat and from wombs. In all kinds of creatures, these four kinds of birth are seen. There are immobile creatures too. Among the ones that roam in the sky, know that all these are born from eggs, or are reptiles. Worms are born from sweat and there are other creatures like that. This is said to be the second kind of birth, one that is inferior. O supreme among brahmanas! After some time, there are some who are born after sprouting through the earth. These are known as plants and trees. O excellent ones! Now learn about the creatures that are born from wombs. Some have two feet. Some have many feet. Some move diagonally. Know that Brahma's eternal womb is the outcome of two things—austerities and auspicious rites. This is the view held by the learned.[148] Know that there are two kinds of auspicious rites for those who have been born—sacrifices and donations at sacrifices and studying. This is the instruction of the ancients. O bulls among brahmanas! A person who knows this in the proper way becomes liberated. Listen. In this way, he is freed from all sins. Space is the first element and it is connected with the atman through the ear. In its natural form, it becomes sound and is the divinity of the directions. Wind is the second element and it is connected with the atman through the skin. In its natural form, it becomes touch and is the divinity of lightning. Light is the third element and it said to be connected with the atman through the eyes. In its natural form, it becomes form and is said to be the divinity of the sun. Know that water is the fourth and is connected with the atman through the tongue. In its natural form, it becomes taste and is the divinity of the moon. Earth is the fifth element and is connected with the atman through the nose. In its natural form, it becomes smell and is the divinity of the wind. These five elements are said to be progressively divided into four categories.[149] I will next relate how all the senses are divided into three categories. Brahmanas who have seen the truth have said that the feet are connected with the atman. In their natural state, they represent movement and their divinity is Vishnu. When apana moves downwards, it is connected with the atman through the anus. In its natural state, it is what is excreted

and its divinity is Mitra. In the act of procreation of all beings, the genital organ is connected with the atman. In its natural state, it is semen and its divinity is Prajapati. Those who are learned about adhyatma say that the hands are connected with the atman. In its natural state, it is represented in action and its divinity is Shakra. The Vishvadevas come before the mind and are said to be connected with the atman through the tongue. In its natural state, it is speech and its divinity is Agni. In adhyatma, the mind is said to instigate the five elements and its natural state is thought of in that way. Its divinity is the Moon. In adhyatma, intelligence is said to be that which moves the six senses.[150] In its natural state it represents what there is to be known and its divinity is Brahma. I have recounted the rules of adhyatma in the proper way. O ones who know about dharma! A person who possesses this knowledge is said to have obtained intelligence. The senses, the objects of the senses and the five great elements—all these should be collected and restrained by the mind. When the mind manages to diminish there, there is no longer any happiness from birth. It is the view of those who are learned that such spirited ones experience true bliss. I will next tell you about what is subtle in sentiment and auspicious. This is about strong and weak renunciation in all beings. A brahmana who is no longer attached to differences between the existence and non-existence of qualities and follows the conduct of being alone obtains bliss. Such a learned person withdraws all desire, like a tortoise drawing in its limbs. Such a liberated man is radiant in every way and is always happy. He controls desire in his atman. He is controlled and his thirst has been exhausted. He has fraternal sentiments of affection towards all creatures. He becomes merged in the brahman. He restrains all the senses that hanker after material objects. Such a sage abandons habitations and uses the fire of adhyatma as kindling. When kindling is offered into the fire, it blazes forth in great radiance. Through the restraint of the sense, a great-souled one is illuminated in that way. With a tranquil soul, he considers all the elements in his heart. Originating within himself, he obtains what is subtler than the most subtle. Fire is the form.[151] Water is the flow of liquids. Wind is touch. The earth is the terrible mire.[152] Space is in the ears. It is enveloped by these five kinds of flows and is overwhelmed with attachment and grief. It is made up of the five elements. It has nine gates. It has two divinities.[153] It is full of rajas and does not deserve to be seen. It has three qualities and three attributes.[154] Foolishly, one assumes a body and is delighted with attachment. Those who have sought refuge with the essence find it difficult to roam around in this world of the living. It is in this way that the wheel of time revolves in this world. This is a terrible, fathomless and great ocean. It is full of delusion. It[155] extends and contracts, awaking the universe, including the immortals. Desire, anger, fear, confusion, hatred and falsehood are extremely difficult to cast away. They can be abandoned through the restraint of the senses. If a person conquers the world, with its three qualities and five elements, it is seen that he obtains an infinite status, beyond the sky. He crosses the river that has desire as its banks and the mind as the fearful current. He crosses the river and the lakes that are so difficult to traverse and vanquishes both desire and anger. He is freed from all sins and beholds the ultimate. By using his mind to control his mind, he sees his atman in his own self. He sees his atman in his own self and sees himself in all beings, in one form and in many forms. There is no doubt that he sees all those forms, like a hundred lamps lit from a single lamp. He is Vishnu, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Prajapati, Dhatri and Vidhatri. He is the lord with a face in every direction. The great-souled one is illuminated in the hearts of all beings. He is in the large numbers of brahmanas, the gods, the asuras, the yakshas, the pishachas, the ancestors, birds and all the large

numbers of rakshasas and bhutas. The maharshis always praise him.”’”’

## Chapter 1878(43)

“‘“Brahma said, ‘Among men, royal kshatriyas possess medium qualities. Among mounts, elephants are like that. Among residents of the forest, lions are like that. Among all animals, it is the sheep.[156] Among those that live in holes, it is the rat. Among cattle, it is the bull. Amidst women, it is the man. There is no doubt that in this world, kings among men are like the Indian fig tree, the rose apple tree, the holy fig tree, the silk cotton tree, the Indian rosewood tree, the Indian paintbrush and the hollow bamboo among trees.[157] They are like the Himalayas, Pariyatra, Sahya, Vindhya, Trikuta, Shveta, Nila, Bhasa, Mount Kashthavat, Shubhaskandha, Mahendra and Mount Malyavat—kings among mountains, and like the Maruts among the ganas. The sun is the lord of the planets and the moon of the nakshatras. Yama is the lord of the ancestors and the ocean of the rivers. Varuna is the king of the waters and Mitra of all the spirits. The sun is said to the lord of all heated bodies and the moon of stellar bodies.[158] Agni is the eternal lord of the elements and Brihaspati of brahmanas. The moon is the lord of herbs and Vishnu of those who are supremely strong. Tvashtri is the lord of those with form and Shiva is the lord of animals. A sacrifice is the lord of dakshina and the rishis of the Vedas. The north is the king of the directions and the powerful moon of brahmanas. Kubera is the lord of all the yakshas and Purandara of the gods. Among subjects, it is Prajapati. This represents the various categories in which beings were created. Among all beings who are immersed in the brahman, I am the foremost. There is no one else who is superior to me or Vishnu. The great Vishnu is immersed in the brahman and he is the king of all the kings. Know him as Ishvara, Vibhu and Prajapati. He is the lord over all men, kinnaras, yakshas, gandharvas, serpents, rakshasas, gods, danavas and snakes. Among those who follow the illustrious one, there is the one with beautiful eyes. She is known as Maheshvari, Mahadevi and Parvati. Know her as the goddess Uma, supremely auspicious among women. Among the wealth of women who provide pleasure, the apsaras are the foremost. Kings desire dharma and brahmanas possess the attributes of dharma. Therefore, kings make efforts to protect brahmanas. If virtuous people suffer in a king’s kingdom, then they take away all his qualities. After death, he moves downwards. If virtuous people are protected in a king’s kingdom, they find delight in this world and obtain the infinite after death. Those great-souled bulls among brahmanas obtain such riches. I will tell you about how those who possess attributes of dharma always move upwards. Non-violence is a sign of dharma. Violence is a sign of adharma. Radiance is the sign of the gods. Deeds constitute the signs of men. Sound is the sign of space. Touch is the sign of the wind. Form is the sign of light. Taste is the sign of water. The earth holds up all creatures and its sign is smell. Speech has the attributes of truth and is cleansed through vowels and consonants. Thoughts constitute the attribute of the mind. These are also said to be an attribute of intelligence. Intelligence imparts purport to the thoughts in the mind. There is no doubt that it is intelligence which provides discernment. A great attribute is meditation. The attribute of a virtuous person is to remain undetected.[159] Pravritti is the attribute of yoga. Knowledge is the attribute of sannyasa. Therefore, in this world an intelligent person should place knowledge at the forefront and

practise renunciation. United with knowledge and renunciation, one obtains the supreme objective. Such a person overcomes opposite sentiments and darkness, death and old age. I have properly told you about the signs of being united with dharma. After this, I will properly tell you my view about how the qualities should be received. Smell is the quality of the earth and is received by the nose. The wind that is in the nose has been ordained to obtain knowledge of smell. Taste is always the quality of water and is received by the tongue. Soma resides in the tongue and has been ordained to obtain knowledge of taste. Form is the quality of light and is received by the eyes. Aditya resides in the eyes and has been ordained to obtain knowledge of form. Touch is the quality of the wind and this is comprehended through the skin. The wind that resides in the skin has been ordained to obtain knowledge of touch. Sound is the quality of space and this is received by the ears. All the directions reside in the ears and are cited as those who know about sound. Thought is the quality of the mind and this is received by wisdom. The attribute of consciousness resides in the heart and has been ordained to obtain knowledge of the mind. Through endeavour in the use of intelligence and great meditation, one can receive consciousness. Thus, there is no doubt that one can always comprehend the unmanifest. Kshetrajna possesses no qualities. It is eternal and is incapable of being grasped through signs. Since kshetrajna has no manifestations, its only attribute is knowledge. The unmanifest resides in the body and it is through this that qualities are created and destroyed. I always see, know and hear how it is latent. Purusha knows this and that is the reason it is known as kshetrajna. Kshetrajna sees everything about the progress of the qualities. He is ancient. Through infinite endeavour, he creates consciousness. He creates again and again. One cannot know him through the qualities of the atman. Kshetrajna can never be obtained or known through truth.[160] He is the quality among all the qualities in creatures. He is supreme among the supreme and the greatest. Therefore, a person who knows about the truth casts aside all truth about the qualities. When the sins are destroyed and qualities cast aside, one enters into kshetrajna. Such a person is beyond opposite pairs of sentiments. Such a person does not bow down before anyone and has no need for svadha. He does not move and he has no abode. He is actually kshetrajna and the supreme lord.”’”’

## Chapter 1879(44)

‘‘‘Brahma said, “I will tell you the entire truth about comprehending the beginning, the middle and the end and about the names and signs that are associated with this. It has been said that day was the first. Night came after that. Within months, shuklapaksha comes first. Among nakshatras, Shravishtha is the first.[161] Among seasons, winter is the first. Earth is the source of all smells and water of all tastes. Light is the source of all forms and the wind of all sensations of touch. Space is the source of all sound. These are qualities created by the elements. After this, I will tell you about what is supreme and first among all creatures. Aditya is the first among all luminous bodies and Agni is the first among all elements. Savitri[162] is the first among all kinds of knowledge and Prajapati among all gods. Omkara[163] is the first among all the Vedas and prana among all kinds of speech. Everything that restrains this world is known as Savitri. Gayatri is the first among all Sama metres and the goat among all animals.[164] The cow is the first among all quadrupeds and brahmanas among all men. The

hawk is the first among all birds. Among all sacrifices, the pouring of oblations is supreme. O best among brahmanas! Among all the things that creep along the ground, the snake is the foremost. There is no doubt that among all the yugas, krita is the first. Gold is the first among all jewels and barley among all plants. Food is said to be supreme among all things that are eaten or swallowed. Water is supreme among all the objects that are drunk. Without any exception, among all the immobile regions, Plaksha is always said to be the first. This is the sacred region of Brahmakshetra.[165] There is no doubt that I am the first among all Prajapatis. Vishnu, whose soul is incomprehensible, is superior to me. He is known as Svayambhu. The great Meru is said to the first among all mountains. Among the directions and the sub-directions, the northern direction is the one that was born first. Ganga, with its three flows, is said to be the first among rivers. The ocean is the first among all lakes and waterbodies. Ishvara is the lord of all gods, danavas, bhutas, pishachas, serpents, rakshasas, men, kinnaras and yakshas. The great Vishnu, immersed in the brahman, is the origin of the world and the universe. In the three worlds, there is no entity which is superior to him. There is no doubt that garhasthya is foremost among ashramas. The unmanifest is the origin of all the worlds and is also their end. Day ends when the sun sets. Night ends when the sun rises. Happiness always ends with unhappiness. Unhappiness always ends with happiness. All accumulations have an end. All ascent ends in descent. Association ends in disassociation. Life ends in death. All action is destroyed. Everything that is born is certain to die. Everything in this world, mobile and immobile, is temporary. Sacrifices, donations, austerities, studies, vows and rituals—all these are destroyed. However, knowledge has no destruction. Therefore, if a person has knowledge, is pure, tranquil in his soul, restrained, without a sense of ownership and devoid of a sense of ego, he is freed from all his sins.”””’

## Chapter 1880(45)

“““Brahma said, “Intelligence is the essence. The mind is the pole.[166] The aggregate of senses constitute the spokes. The great elements are the circumference and nimesha[167]sets the boundaries. It is overwhelmed by old age and sorrow. It moves with disease and hardship. Depending on the time and the place, there is the sound of toil and endeavour. Day and night constitute the revolutions. Hot and cold set the limits. Both happiness and unhappiness end in hardships. Hunger and thirst are like nails. Shade and heat leave marks along the path. Even a brief instant of time and the twinkling of an eye can cause distraction. It is full of people who are terribly confused and lack consciousness, being dragged along. Measured in months and fortnights, it moves unevenly in this world. The store of tamas is the mud. Rajas provides the impulse for movement. The ornament of sattva provides illumination. The wheel is made out of the conflict of qualities. Sounds of not having obtained what one wants are like the nave and increases grief as it revolves. It has cause and effect and attachment increases its size.[168] Greed and ignorance are clearly responsible for making it unsteady. Fear and confusion become possessions and cause delusion among creatures. One hopes to obtain what brings joy and pleasure and is seized by desire and anger. Though it is specially brought into existence by Mahat and the others, it is destroyed because of the influence of an attachment to tamas. Without tiring, the wheel of time moves on, with the speed of thought. This wheel of time is devoid of

consciousness and is united with opposite pairs of sentiments. The entire universe, with the immortals, are awakened,[169] extended and then contracted again. Among all creatures, a man who always knows about the pravritti associated with the wheel of time and the truth about nivritti is never confused. He is liberated from all kinds of hardships. Such a sage overcomes all kinds of opposite sentiments. He is freed from all sins and obtains the supreme objective. Among all the four ashramas, garhasthya, brahmacharya, vanaprastha and the state of being a mendicant,[170] garhasthya is said to be the foundation. It has eternally been stated that the following of the ordinances of the sacred texts brings benefit and fame. A person who is born in a family with special qualities should first observe the vows, practise the sacraments and cleanse his soul. Having got to know the Vedas, he should return.[171] He must always be devoted to his own wife. He must be controlled and good in conduct. He must conquer his senses. He must faithfully perform the five great sacrifices.[172] Always engaged in the rites mentioned in the Vedas, he must eat what is left after serving the gods and the ancestors. According to capacity and following the prescribed ordinances, he must donate at sacrifices. A sage will not excessively use his hands or feet. Nor will he excessively use his eyes. He will not be excessive in speech. He will then be classified as someone virtuous. He will always wear the sacred thread. He will wear clean and white clothes. He will be pure in his vows. He will always be controlled, restrained and generous. He will associate with those who are good. He will conquer his penis and his stomach. He will be friendly, good in conduct and calm. He will sport a staff made out of bamboo and hold a water pot filled with water. Having studied, he will teach.[173] He will perform sacrifices and officiate at sacrifices. He will give and receive. He will follow these six attributes of conduct.[174] In this world, there are three tasks brahmanas can use for earning a living. Studying, teaching and performing sacrifices are only for purification.[175] The other three, studying, teaching and the performance of sacrifices are for purposes of dharma. A person who knows about dharma will therefore perform these three tasks without any distraction. A sage is controlled, friendly, full of forgiveness and looks upon all creatures impartially. A householder brahmana who does all this to the best of his capacity, is rigid in his vows and is controlled and pure, conquers heaven.”’”’

## Chapter 1881(46)

‘“‘Brahma said, “One must properly follow the path mentioned earlier. One must study to the best of one’s capacity and observe brahmacharya. A sage will be engaged in his own dharma. He will be learned and will control all his senses. He will be engaged in what brings pleasure to his preceptor. He will be pure and devoted to the dharma of truth. Having taken the preceptor’s permission, he will eat the food, without criticizing it. He will eat *havishya* obtained through begging for alms.[176] He will sit, stand, or roam around.[177] Pure and controlled, he will offer oblations into the fire twice a day. He will always wield a staff made out of bilva or *palasha*.[178] A brahmana must wear linen or cotton clothes, or deerskin, or garments that are dyed reddish brown. There can be a girdle made out of munja grass. His hair must be matted and he must bathe every day. He must wear the sacred thread. He must study. Without any greed, he must always observe the vows. He must purify himself and always offer water to the gods. A brahmachari who controls himself in this way is

praised. He is self-restrained and controls his seed. Such a person conquers heaven. Having obtained the best kind of birth,[179] he is not dislodged from that state. He must cleanse himself and observe all the sacraments in the stage of brahmacharya. After that, he can leave the village and dwell in the forest as a mendicant sage.[180] He will be clad in hides and bark and have his bath in the morning. He will always roam around in the forest and never return to the village again. When guests arrive, he will worship them and offer them refuge. He will subsist on fruits, leaves, ordinary roots and dark millet.[181] He will subsist on water and air and everything else that is obtained from trees in the forest. Single-mindedly and in due progression, he will eat according to his initiation.[182] If a guest arrives, he will offer him roots and fruits as alms. He must always, single-mindedly, offer as alms whatever food there is available. He must always control his speech and eat after the gods and the guests have eaten. His mind should not be effusive. He must eat limited quantities and seek refuge with the gods. He must be self-controlled, friendly and forgiving. He must wear his hair and beard long. He must be engaged in offering oblations and studying. He must be devoted to the dharma of truth. He must abandon all attachment to the body. He must be accomplished and always controlled in the forest. He must conquer his senses. A person in the vanaprastha stage who acts in this way conquers heaven.

‘“‘“‘“After having followed garhasthya, brahmacharya and vanaprastha, a person who desires moksha can resort to the supreme conduct.[183] He grants fearlessness to all creatures and no longer performs any tasks. He is engaged in the welfare of all beings. He is friendly. Such a sage controls all his senses. As he wishes, he eats food that has not been solicited or has not been prepared, but has just presented itself. He must approve of whatever food has presented itself and must wish to eat only a mouthful. He must eat only for surviving on this journey of life and only for the sake of sustaining life. He will eat whatever has been obtained through dharma and not to satisfy desire. He will accept only a mouthful of food and garments and nothing more than that. He will accept what he can eat and never more than that. He will not accept gifts from others. Nor will he ever give to them. Because of the helplessness of beings, a learned person will always share with them. He will not seize the possessions of others. Nor will he receive without having been asked to. Having enjoyed some object, he will not desire it again. He will only use earth, water, stones, leaves, flowers and fruits that are lying around.[184] His action will not be driven by desire. He will not earn a living as an artisan. He will not desire gold. He will not hate. Nor will he teach. He will not own any possessions. He will only eat what has been purified through devotion. He will stay away from arguments. He will not be addicted to futile occupations. He will not have any associations with any creatures. Having ignited a fire, he will roam around for alms. However, he will only seek these from a house where the fire has been put out and the residents have eaten.[185] A person who knows about moksha will only wish to beg after the kitchen vessels have been washed. He will not rejoice at having obtained something. Nor will he be distressed if he doesn’t obtain something. When he wishes to beg, he will be controlled and will only seek what is sufficient for the moment. He will not seek gains that ordinary people want. Nor will he eat when he has been honoured. A mendicant will hide himself, so that he is not given things as a mark of respect. He will not eat food that is putrid, acidic, bitter, astringent, pungent, succulent, sweet or not fit to be tasted. He will only eat enough to sustain life, enough to remain alive on this journey. A person who knows about moksha will not desire to earn sustenance through a conduct that causes conflict with other creatures. When he seeks alms, he should never follow another person who is also

begging. He should never reveal the dharma he practises. He should be pure and roam around alone. He should seek refuge in an empty house, in the forest, under a tree, near a river or in a mountainous cavern. During the summer, he can spend a night in a village. During the monsoon, it can be more than one night. With his progress determined by the movement of the sun, he should roam around on the earth like a worm. He should roam around on earth with an eye of compassion towards all beings. He should not accumulate anything and should not become attached to where he resides. A person who knows about moksha will always perform his rites with pure water. Such a man will always perform his ablutions with water that has been taken.[186] He will always practise non-violence, brahmacharya, truth, uprightness, lack of anger, lack of jealousy, self-control and lack of calumny. He will possess these eight attributes and control his senses in following the vows. He will always have a conduct that is without sin, without deceit and without falsehood. He will never perform tasks for the sake of obtaining benedictions or those that are associated with violence. Nor will he follow the dharma of accumulation followed in the world. He will overcome all the sentiments and wander around, satisfied with only a little. He will be impartial towards all creatures, mobile and immobile. He will not seek to defeat another person. Nor will he be defeated by another. A person who is trusted by all creatures is said to be someone who knows about moksha. He will not reflect on the future. Nor will he think about the past. He will be indifferent towards the present. He will be controlled and wait for the time.[187] He will not soil anything through sight, thoughts and words. Directly or indirectly, he will not do anything that is a sin. He will withdraw his senses, like a tortoise draws in all its limbs. He will make the senses decay. Devoid of the senses, he will look towards his mind and his intelligence. He will be without the opposite pairs of sentiments. He will not bow down before anyone. He will be without sounds of svaha. He will be without a sense of ownership. He will be without ego. He will be without yoga and kshema.[188] He will be without hope. He will be unattached towards all creatures. He will be without refuge. He will know everything. He will be free in every way. There is no doubt that he will be emancipated. He will only base himself on the sparkling one.[189] It is without hands, feet and back. It is without a head and without a stomach. It does not receive any of the qualities and is without tasks. It is without smell, without touch, without form and without sound. It is without touch, without base and without flesh. It is without anxiety and without decay. It is eternal and is always based in the heart. A person who sees the atman in all creatures knows that they do not die. Intelligence cannot reach it. Nor can the senses, the gods, the Vedas, sacrifices, the worlds, austerities, or valour. It cannot be comprehended through signs. It is said that the learned obtain it through knowledge. Therefore, those who know about dharma and follow the vows of dharma do not follow signs. A learned man knows the nature of true conduct and follows this mysterious dharma. He may not be foolish. However, he does not censure dharma[190] and follows it, as if he is foolish. He always does this, even if others disrespect him. A virtuous one follows the conduct of true dharma, even if he is censured. A person who possesses this kind of conduct is said to the best among sages. He properly understands the senses, the objects of the senses, the five great elements, mind, intelligence, the atman, the unmanifest Purusha and everything else that is enumerated. However, he abandons all this for the sake of what is sparkling. Such a person is freed from all his bonds and obtains heaven. A person who knows the truth knows what has been enumerated about the time that brings about an end. He meditates single-mindedly, without any refuge, and is emancipated. He is free from all attachments, like the

wind in the sky. Even when everything that he has accumulated is destroyed, he is without terror. He obtains the supreme destination.”’”’

## Chapter 1882(47)

“‘“Brahma said, “The ancient ones who are certain in their determinations say that renunciation is an austerity. Learned brahmanas who are immersed in the brahman say that knowledge is the supreme brahman. Knowledge of the supreme brahman is a long distance away. The knowledge of the Vedas provides the refuge. It is without the opposite pairs of sentiments. It is without qualities. It is eternal. It cannot be thought of. It is the supreme secret. Those who have fortitude see that destination through knowledge and austerities. These are the purified and sparkling ones, who have transcended tamas and rajas and have been cleansed. Silently, those who resort to austerities advance towards the supreme objective. People who know about the brahman are always devoted to renunciation. Those who follow the pursuit of dharma say that austerities are like a lamp. They know that knowledge is supreme and that it is the best form of renunciation and austerities. There may be a person who has determined the truth and knows it, using his unobstructed knowledge. He succeeds in going everywhere and knows the atman that is inside all creatures. Such a learned person can see association and also disassociation. He sees the unity between the two and is freed from all misery. He does not desire anything. He does not disrespect anything. Even when he is in this world, he thinks of himself as being immersed in the brahman. He knows the true qualities of Pradhana, the one who has ordained all creatures. He is without a sense of ownership. He is without ego. He is beyond the opposite sentiments. He does not bow down before anyone. He is devoid of sounds of svadha. He is devoid of qualities and is always without any conflict. There is no doubt that such a person is liberated and advances towards tranquility. Such a being gives up everything associated with qualities and all tasks, good or bad. He gives up both truth and falsehood. There is no doubt that such a person is emancipated. The unmanifest is the seed of creation. Intelligence is the gigantic trunk. Great Ahamkara represents the branches and the senses are the hollows inside them. The giant elements are the smaller branches and also the branches that are smaller still. This eternal tree is the brahman. It is always full of leaves and flowers. It yields fruits that are good and bad. It provides sustenance to all beings. Through the supreme seat of knowledge, one can cut and pierce this tree. One then abandons the association with death and birth and obtains immortality. Such a person is without a sense of ownership and without a sense of ego. There is no doubt that he is liberated. There are always two birds that are friends.[191] Of these, one is said to be unconscious and the other is said to be conscious. The unconscious spirit is full of conflict. The other intelligent spirit is inside the atman. The kshetrajna uses intelligence to understand the conflict of the spirits. He overcomes the qualities and is freed from the noose of death.”’”’

## Chapter 1883(48)

‘“‘Brahma said, “Some say that the tree is full of the brahman. Some say that Mahat is full of the brahman. Some say that Purusha is unmanifest. Some say that it is supreme and is free from disease. Some think that everything is created from the unmanifest and also dissolves into it. There may be a person who is indifferent and breathes without agitation when the time for his death arrives. Such a person obtains his atman and deserves to be immortal. Even if he controls himself with his atman even for a short instant, through the favours of the atman, he becomes learned and obtains an end that is without decay. Such a person uses pranayama to restrain the breath of life again and again. He does this for twelve times and for twenty-four times after that.[192] Having thus made the soul tranquil, one obtains everything that one wants. When the quality of sattva arises from the unmanifest, such a person deserves to be immortal. Those who know about sattva praise it, since there is nothing that is superior to this. The learned have deduced that one can obtain Purusha by resorting to sattva. O brahmanas! One cannot reach Purusha through any other means. Forgiveness, fortitude, non-violence, impartiality, truth, uprightness, knowledge, renunciation and detachment—these are said to be the conduct that is associated with sattva. It is through such deductions that learned people think that sattva and Purusha are one and the same. There is no need for any further reflection on this. Some learned people who have based themselves on knowledge have said that kshetrajna and sattva are identical and there is no difference between them. However, these are always different and one should not think about this. One should know the truth. These are naturally different. Those who are learned about policy have determined the difference between unity and disassociation. It is evident that a gnat and a fig tree are together, but are also different. Though a fish and water may be together, they are actually different. A drop of water may be united with the leaf of a lotus, but they are different.”’[193]

‘“The preceptor said, ‘The brahmanas were thus addressed by the grandfather of the worlds.[194] However, overcome by doubts, the excellent brahmanas asked again.

‘“‘The rishis asked, “Which of the many kinds of dharma is said to be the best? We see that the progress of different kinds of dharma is often contradictory. When the body is destroyed, some say nothing remains. Others say something is left and have no doubts about this. Still others have doubts about everything. Some say that the eternal is not truly eternal. Others say that it is non-existent.[195] Some say that it has a single form. Others say that it has two parts. And still others say that there are many. Some say that it is one and the same. Others that they are distinct. Others say that the situation is diverse. There are brahmanas who are wise and have seen the truth. They think in this way. There are others who have matted hair, and are clad in deerskin. Others have shaved heads. Some are naked. Some don’t wish to bathe. Others wish to bathe. Some desire to eat. Others are engaged in fasting. Some praise deeds. Others praise tranquility. Some praise moksha. Others praise different kinds of enjoyment. Some desire riches. Others wish to be poor. Some worship the means used. Others say that this is unimportant. Some praise sacred deeds and fame. Others say that this is unimportant. Some are devoted to the path of virtue. Others are immersed in doubt. Some follow misery. Others follow joy. Still others are engaged in meditation. Some patient ones are engaged in sacrifices. Others follow the practice of giving. Some praise only one method. Others praise everything. Some praise austerities. Others praise studying. Some speak of knowledge and renunciation. Others think of the nature of beings. In this way, many kinds of dharma present themselves and brahmanas follow them. O supreme among the gods! We are confused and undecided. We cannot understand. People present themselves

and say, ‘This is best. That is best.’ Everyone always worships the dharma that he practises. That is the reason our wisdom is destroyed and our minds are dragged in different directions. O excellent one! That is the reason we wish that what is beneficial is explained to us. Thereafter, you should tell us what is supremely secret. What is the connection between sattva and kshetrajna and what is the cause of this?”’”

‘Vasudeva said, “The illustrious one, the creator of the worlds, was addressed by the brahmanas in this way. The intelligent one, with dharma in his soul, instructed them about the truth.”’

# Chapter 1884(49)

“‘‘Brahma said, “O excellent ones! I will now tell you what you have asked. Listen to everything properly and in due order. It is the view that non-violence towards all creatures is the supreme task. That is the highest state and is free of anxiety. It is the sign of dharma. The ancient ones, certain in their determinations, have said that knowledge is the best. Therefore, through knowledge, one is purified and is freed from all sins. Those who are violent in conduct towards other people are non-believers. They are immersed in greed and confusion and go to hell. Those who single-mindedly pursue beneficial acts are born again and again and find pleasure in this world. There are learned ones who faithfully perform tasks. They do not desire anything. They are patient and virtuous in their insight. After this, I will tell you about the association between sattva and kshetrajna. O excellent ones! Listen to the association between them and to the disassociation. This is said to be the connection between the subject and the object. Purusha is always the subject and sattva is said to be the object. In an earlier section, this has been explained as the difference between a gnat and a fig-tree. Sattva is always unconscious. It enjoys and does not know. The one who enjoys the enjoyer[196] is the one who knows. Sattva is said to be associated with the qualities. It is transient and possesses opposite sentiments. Kshetrajna has the attribute of being without qualities. It is eternal and without opposite sentiments. It has no parts. It always enjoys sattva, like the leaf of a lotus enjoys the water on it. It knows all the qualities. Despite being associated with them, it is not attached. It is like a drop of water that moves on the leaf of a lotus. There is no doubt that Purusha is unattached in that way. It has been determined that matter originates with sattva, which is in turn owned by Purusha. The connection between the two is like that between matter and its creator. When one is in a place that is dark, one advances with the help of a lamp. In that way, if one desires the supreme, one advances with the lamp of sattva. That lamp shines as long as matter and its qualities exist. When matter and its qualities are destroyed, the light is also extinguished. The manifest is said to be the quality of sattva, while Purusha is unmanifest. O brahmanas! Know this. I will tell you more. Even if there is a thousand, it is difficult to comprehend and one doesn’t attain intelligence.[197] However, even with one-fourth of that,[198] if one has intelligence, one can obtain happiness. Know that the attainment of dharma depends on the means. A person who knows the means is intelligent and obtains extreme happiness. There may be a man who is travelling without the requisite provisions. He suffers from great hardships and may even die before he reaches his destination. In that way, actions may, nor may not, yield fruits.[199] By resorting to his own atman, a man can determine what is auspicious and what is inauspicious. If a person proceeds without knowledge of the truth, that is like a man rashly advancing on foot along an unfamiliar road. However, when an intelligent person advances along that same road, it is like swiftly advancing on a chariot yoked to horses. When one has ascended a tall mountain, one does not look down at the ground.[200] However, even if a charioteer is mounted on a chariot, he can be seen to be afflicted and unconscious. Therefore, one should advance on a chariot as long as there is a road for the chariot. When a track for the chariot no longer exists, a wise person abandons the chariot. An intelligent person who knows the truth about the ordinances of yoga advances in that way. He uses his

great intelligence to progressively move from one stage to the next. If a person plunges into a great and terrible ocean without a boat and tries to cross using his arms, there is no doubt that he will be destroyed. However, a wise person knows about the different categories and uses a boat. There is no doubt that using oars, he is not exhausted and immersing himself in the water, swiftly crosses over. Having crossed over to the other side, he no longer possesses any sense of ownership and abandons the boat. For the person on a chariot and on foot, this has already been explained earlier. If a person is overwhelmed by attachment and delusion, he is like a fisherman attached by a sense of ownership to his boat. He is whirled around. One cannot climb onto a boat and roam around on land. In that way, it is not recommended that one should ascend a chariot and travel on water. In different kinds of terrain, one accordingly has different kinds of deeds. Depending on the deeds that are performed in this world, one obtains the fruits.

‘“‘“There is an entity that has no smell, taste, form, touch or sound. Using their intelligence, sages think about this. This is said to be Pradhana. Pradhana is unmanifest and one of the aspects of the unmanifest is Mahat. An attribute of Mahat, generated from Pradhana, is Ahamkara. Through Pradhana, the attribute of the great elements orginates from Ahamkara. The qualities of objects are said to be different from the elements. The unmanifest follows the dharma of a seed and creates from its own self. We have also heard that Mahat follows the dharma of a seed and has also been created. Ahamkara follows the dharma of a seed and has also been created again and again. The five great elements follow the dharma of being a seed and also creating. Those which possess the dharma of seeds are usually said to be ones that do not create. However, the five elements are special in this way and possess a distinctive property. Space has only one quality and wind is said to possess two qualities. Light is said to possess three qualities and water has four qualities. Know that the earth, full of mobile and immobile objects, has five qualities. This goddess is the creator of all beings and has agreeable and disagreeable aspects. O supreme among brahmanas! Sound, touch, form, taste and smell as the fifth—know that these are the five qualities associated with the earth. Smell is always associated with the earth and smell is said to have many different types. Therefore, I will tell you in detail about the many qualities of smell. Agreeable, disagreeable, sweet, sour, pungent, pervasive, concentrated, oily, dry and clear—know that these are the ten kinds of qualities associated with the earth. Sound, touch, form and taste are said to be the qualities of water. I will tell you about the many kinds of smell that have been spoken about. Sweet, sour, pungent, bitter, astringent and saline—in detail, these are the six kinds of smell that are said to be associated with water. Sound, touch and form—these are said to be the three qualities associated with light. Form is said to be the quality of light and form is of many different types. White, dark, red, blue, yellow, orange, short, long, large, square and circular—in detail, these are the twelve kinds of attributes associated with form. Brahmanas who know about dharma and are truthful in speech should always know this. Sound and touch—these are the two qualities known to be associated with the wind. Touch is a quality of the wind and there are said to be many kinds of touch. Hot, cold, agreeable, disagreeable, gentle, extensive, hard, oily, smooth, slippery, rough, soft—in detail, these are said to the twelve qualities associated with the wind. Brahmanas who know dharma, have insight about the truth and are successful know this. It has been said that space has the single quality of sound. In detail, I will recount the many different qualities of sound. These are known as *shadaja, rishabha, gandhara, madhyama, panchama*, and after that,

*nishada* and *dhaivata*.[201] There are agreeable and disagreeable sounds, combined together and separate. In this way, sound is generated from space and has many different types. Space is supreme among the elements and Ahamkara is superior to it. Intelligence is superior to Ahamkara and the atman is superior to intelligence. The unmanifest is superior to the atman and Purusha is superior to the unmanifest. A person who knows the difference between superior and inferior attributes obtains the infinite.”’”’

## Chapter 1885(50)

‘“‘Brahma said, “The mind is the lord of the five elements. In controlling them and releasing them, the mind is like the soul of the elements. The mind always rules over the great elements. Intelligence possesses the power and, over everything, is said to be kshetrajna. The mind controls the senses, like a charioteer controls well-trained horses. The senses, the mind and intelligence are always associated with kshetrajna. The atman that is in beings ascends the chariot and drives it around on all sides. The great elements are yoked to it and intelligence constitutes the reins. The aggregate of senses are yoked[202] and the mind is the charioteer. Intelligence is always like the reins and the chariot is immersed in the great brahman. A learned person always knows that the chariot is immersed in the brahman. In all the worlds, such a person is patient and is never overcome by confusion. The unmanifest has all these mobile and immobile objects as an end. The moon and the sun provide illumination to the worlds, adorned by the planets and the nakshatras. On every side, it is decorated by nets of rivers and mountains. There are many kinds of ornaments in every direction. This provides sustenance to all creatures and it is also the objective of all those who possess life. A person who knows about the kshetra always roams around in the forest that is the brahman. There are many creatures, mobile and immobile, in this world. Those are the first to be destroyed. The qualities that result from the elements are destroyed later. Depending on their qualities, many different kinds of beings have originated from the five elements—gods, men, gandharvas, pishachas, asuras and rakshasas. All of them have been created from nature, not from deeds and not from any other cause. The brahmanas are the creators of the universe and are born again and again. It is from them that the five great elements have been generated. When the time arrives, they are destroyed, like waves in the ocean. Then, the elements that create the universe merge into the great elements. These five elements are freed and merge into Prajapati. Through his austerities, Prajapati is the lord who created everything. The rishis know this through their austerities. In due order, they undertake austerities, surviving on fruits and roots. They control themselves through their austerities. Having become successful, they can see the three worlds. Herbs, medicines and many kinds of knowledge are obtained through austerities. Austerities are the foundation of success. There are things that are difficult to obtain, difficult to name, difficult to conquer and difficult to learn. Austerities ensure success in all this. Austerities are difficult to surpass. There may be a person who drinks liquor, kills a brahmana, steals, kills a foetus or violates his preceptor’s bed. By tormenting himself well through austerities, he is freed from his sins. If men, ancestors, gods, animals,[203] animals, birds and all other mobile and immobile objects are always devoted to austerities, they can always obtain success

through austerities. It is through austerities that the immensely fortunate gods went to heaven. If a person single-mindedly performs beneficial acts, even if these are tinged with egoism, he approaches Prajapati. However, there are pure ones without a sense of ownership and without a sense of ego. They are pure and devoted to the yoga of meditation. Those great-souled ones obtain supreme and great worlds. They are devoted to the yoga of meditation and are always tranquil. Their selves penetrate the unmanifest and obtain undecaying bliss there. There are those without a sense of ownership and without a sense of ego. They are devoted to the yoga of meditation. They penetrate the unmanifest and obtain supreme and great worlds. They are generated from the unmanifest and merge into it again. They are freed from tamas and rajas and resort to sattva alone. They are freed from all sins and liberated from all divisions. They know kshetrajna. They know what there is to be known. A sage must always be controlled and resort to consciousness alone. The mind must be fixed on the consciousness and on the eternal mystery. The unmanifest has objects as a manifestation. But a focus on these is said to be a sign of ignorance. Listen to what is beyond all signs associated with the qualities. The word Mrityu has two syllables. Akshara, the eternal brahman, has three syllables. Mama is Mrityu and namama is eternal.[204] There are some evil-minded men who praise deeds. The great-souled ones who know do not praise deeds. Death leads to birth as a creature, characterized by the sixteen.[205] The body is the creation of ignorance and those who are after immortality refuse to accept it. It is said that Purusha is comprehended through knowledge, not through action. It is without something that has come before. It is immortal. It is eternal. It is immutable. A person who realizes it within his atman refuses to accept something that does not lead to immortality. It is because of this certain reason that they refuse to accept something that is not immortal. Such a person casts aside all resolution and controls his atman through his own self. He knows the auspicious brahman and there is no return after that. Through the favours of sattva, he obtains the benefit of tranquility. The signs of this favour is that everything is seen as if in a dream.[206] This is the destination of liberated ones who are devoted to knowledge. They can see all the consequences of action. They are not addicted to these outcomes. This is eternal dharma. Those who possess knowledge obtain this. This is unblemished conduct. Such a person is impartial towards all creatures. He is without desire and without hope. He is always indifferent towards what he sees. He is capable of progressing to that destination. O supreme among brahmana rishis! I have thus told you everything. Act swiftly in this way and you will obtain success."'

'"The preceptor said,[207] 'Thus addressed by the preceptor, Brahma, the great-souled sages acted in this way and obtained the worlds. O immensely fortunate one! You should also act in accordance with Brahma's words. If you purify yourself and act properly in that way, you will obtain success.'"

'Vasudeva continued, "The preceptor thus spoke to the disciple about supreme dharma. O Kounteya! He acted in that way and obtained moksha. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Having accomplished what he was meant to do, the disciple obtained that state. Having obtained it, one does not grieve."

'Arjuna asked, "O Krishna! O Janardana! Who was that brahmana and who was the disciple? O lord! If I can hear the truth about this, tell me."

'Vasudeva replied, "O mighty-armed one! Know me. I am the preceptor and the mind is the disciple. O Dhananjaya! It is because of my affection towards you that I have revealed this secret to

you. O one who is excellent in vows! Having heard about adhyatma, act properly. O extender of the Kuru lineage! If you practise this dharma properly, your soul will be cleansed of all sins and you will obtain moksha alone. I told you this earlier, when the time for battle had presented itself. O mighty-armed one! Therefore, make up your mind to follow this. O foremost among the Bharata lineage! O lord! It has been a long time since I have seen my father. O Phalguna! With your permission, I wish to see him."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Addressed by Krishna in these words, Dhananjaya replied, "O Krishna! Today, we will go to the city of Gajasahvya. We will meet King Yudhishthira, who has dharma in his soul. O unassailable one! Take his permission and then go to your city."'

## Chapter 1886(51)

Vaishampayana said, 'After this, Krishna instructed Daruka to yoke the horses. In a short while, Daruka informed him that the horses had been yoked. Pandava instructed that arrangements be made for the journey. "Make the arrangements. We will leave for the city of Gajasahvya." O lord of the earth! Thus addressed, the soldiers made the arrangements and informed the infinitely energetic Partha that everything was ready. Krishna and Pandava ascended the chariot and departed. O lord of the earth! On their way, they carried on a wonderful and affectionate conversation. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! Vasudeva was on the chariot and the greatly energetic Dhananjaya again spoke these words to him. "O extender of the Vrishni lineage! It is because of your favours that the king has obtained victory. The enemy has been slain and he has obtained the kingdom, without any thorns. O Madhusudana! The Pandavas possess a protector in you. You were the boat that enabled us to cross the ocean of the Kurus. O creator of the universe! I bow down before you. O soul of the universe! O origin of the universe! I know you only to the extent that you allow my mind to know you. O Madhusudana! The fire has always been created out of your energy. O lord! You find pleasure in your sporting. Heaven and earth are the result of your maya. Everything in this universe, mobile and immobile, is established in you. You are the eternal creator of all the different categories of beings, earth, the firmament and everything mobile and immobile. The sparkling moonlight is your smile. The seasons are your senses. The moving wind is your breath of life. Eternal death is your rage. O immensely intelligent one! Shri, seated on a lotus, is always established in your favours. You are sport. You are contentment. You are fortitude. You are forgiveness. Everything mobile and immobile is based in you. O unblemished one! You are said to be the destruction that comes at the end of a yuga. Even if I try for an extremely long period of time, I am incapable of recounting your qualities. O lotus-eyed one! You are the supreme atman. I bow down before you. O unassailable one! I know from Narada, Devala, Krishna Dvaipayana and the grandfather of the Kurus[208] that everything is based in you. You are alone the lord of men. O unblemished one! Because of your favours towards me, you told me that too. O Janardana! I will properly follow all this. What you have done to ensure our pleasure is wonderful. You slew Kouravya, Dhritarashtra's wicked son, in the battle and burnt down his soldiers. It was only thereafter that I defeated them in the encounter. You performed the deeds whereby I obtained the victory. It was through the valour of your intelligence that we could defeat

Duryodhana in the battle. You showed us the means to slay Karna, the wicked Saindhava and Bhurishrava. O Devaki's son! Without any reflection, I will do everything that you have affectionately asked me to. O one who knows about dharma! O unblemished one! I will meet King Yudhishthira, who has dharma in his soul, and request him to let you go. O lord! I think it is a good idea that you should go to Dvaraka. O Madhusudana! You will soon see the maternal uncle,[209] the invincible Baladeva and all the other bulls among the Vrishnis." Conversing in this way, they reached Varanasahvya.[210]

'It was full of people and they entered cheerfully. O great king! They went to Dhritarashtra's house, which was like Shakra's residence, and saw Dhritarashtra, lord of men, the immensely intelligent Vidura, King Yudhishthira, the invincible Bhimasena and the two Pandavas who were the sons of Madri. Dhritarashtra was seated and the unvanquished Yuyutsu stood before him. The immensely wise Gandhari was seen, with Pritha, the beautiful Krishna,[211] Subhadra and all the other women of the Bharata lineage surrounding Gandhari. Those two scorchers of enemies approached King Dhritarashtra. They announced their names and touched his feet. They worshipped Kshatta and asked him if he was well. With the aged king, they honoured him too. O great king! Since it was night, Dhritarashtra granted the extenders of the Kuru lineage and the intelligent Janardana permission to leave for their houses. Having obtained the king's permission, they went to their own respective residences. The valiant Krishna went to Dhananjaya's house. As is proper, he was honoured there with every object of desire. With Dhananjaya as his companion, the intelligent Krishna slept.

'When night was over and it was morning, they performed their morning ablutions properly and went to Dharmaraja's residence. The great-minded Dharmaraja was there, with his advisers. Those two immensely strong ones entered and saw him. Dharmaraja was seated and they saw him, like the Ashvins meeting the king of the gods. Varshneya and the bull among the Kuru lineage approached the king. He affectionately gave them permission to be seated. On seeing them, the intelligent king wished to speak to them. The best among eloquent ones, supreme among kings, spoke these words. "O brave ones! O extenders of the Yadu and Kuru lineages! I think you wish to say something. Do not hesitate and quickly tell me. I will do everything." Having been thus addressed, Phalguna, accomplished in speech, humbly approached and replied to Dharmaraja in these words. "O king! The powerful Vasudeva has been away for a long time. With your permission, he wishes to see his father. If you so think, please grant him permission to go. O brave one! Grant him leave to go to the city of Anarta."[212] Yudhishthira replied, "O Pundarikaksha! O fortunate one! O Madhusudana! Go now to the city of Dvaravati and see the lord who is the son of Shura.[213] O mighty-armed one! O Keshava! It pleases me that you should go. You have not seen my maternal uncle and the goddess Devaki for a long time. O immensely wise one! O Madhava! Meet my maternal uncle, Vasudeva, and Baladeva and convey my words of worship, as they deserve. O Madhava! Always remember me, Bhima, supreme among powerful ones, Phalguna, Nakula and Sahadeva. O mighty-armed one! O unblemished one! Having seen your father and the Vrishnis in the land of Anarta, you will again return for the horse sacrifice. O Satvata! Depart after taking many kinds of jewels and riches and all the other desirable objects. O Madhava! O brave one! It is through your favours that we have slain our enemies and obtained the entire earth." Kouravya Dharmaraja Yudhishthira spoke in this way. Vasudeva, supreme among men, replied in these words. "O mighty-armed one! All the jewels, riches and the entire earth

only belong to you now. O lord! You alone will be the lord of all the riches that are there in my house." Having said this, Gada's eldest brother worshipped Dharma's valiant son.[214] He met his father's sister in the proper way.[215] He worshipped her and circumambulated her. He was appropriately greeted by her and by also Vidura and all the others. Gada's elder brother then left the city of Nagapura[216] on a divine chariot, with four tawny horses yoked to it. With the permission of Yudhishthira and his father's sister, the mighty-armed Janardana also took Subhdra on his chariot.[217] He departed, surrounded by large numbers of citizens. The one with the best of apes on his banner,[218] Satyaki, Madravati's sons, Bhima himself, with the valour of a king of elephants, and Vidura followed the infinitely intelligent Madhava. Then the valiant Janardana asked all the extenders of the Kuru kingdom and Vidura to return. He asked Daruka and Satyaki to swiftly urge the horses. Janardana, the one who crushed large numbers of the enemy, proceeded, followed by the foremost among the Shini lineage. The powerful one advanced towards the city of Anarta, like Shatakratu going to heaven after slaying large numbers of the enemy.'

## Chapter 1887(52)

Vaishampayana said, 'As Varshneya proceeded towards Dvaraka, those bulls among men, scorchers of enemies, embraced him and with their followers, returned. Phalguna repeatedly embraced Varshneya. As long as he could see him, he continued to glance back at him. It was with a great deal of difficulty that Partha turned his eyes away from Govinda. The invincible Krishna also withdrew his gaze in a similar way. I will now tell you the many extraordinary signs that were associated with the great-souled one's departure. Listen. Ahead of the chariot, a strong wind began to blow and cleared all stones, dust and thorns from the path. Ahead of the wielder of the Sharnga bow, Vasava showered down pure and fragrant rain and divine flowers. As the mighty-armed one advanced, he came upon the plains of a desert and saw the infinitely energetic Utanka, foremost among sages, there. The large-eyed and energetic one worshipped the sage and asked the sage about his welfare, having been worshipped back in return. Utanka worshipped Madhusudana and asked him about his welfare. The best among brahmanas then asked Madhava, "O Shouri! You went to the residences of the Kurus and the Pandavas. Were you able to establish permanent fraternal relationships between them?[219] You should explain everything to me. O Keshava! O bull among the Vrishni lineage! Those brave ones are your matrimonial allies and you have always loved them. Did you succeed in your intentions? O scorcher of enemies! Perhaps the five sons of Pandu and the sons of Dhritarashtra will sport with you in this world. Will the kings be happy in their own kingdoms? O Madhava! With you as a protector, the Kouravas must have been pacified. O son![220] My trust about this possibility has always been vested in you. O Krishna! That was my desire about the Bharatas and perhaps you have been successful."

'Vasudeva replied, "O brahmana! I made efforts to bring about fraternal feelings among the Kouravas. However, they preferred adharma and I could not prevent the conflict. Therefore, all of them have been slain, with their sons and their relatives. Whether one uses intelligence or whether one uses strength, destiny is impossible to overcome. O maharshi! O unblemished one! You know

everything about this. Bhishma and Vidura referred to me, but they didn't listen to them either. Thereafter, they clashed against each other and went to Yama's abode. The five Pandavas alone remain, their friends and their sons have also been slain. All the sons of Dhritarashtra have been killed, with their sons and their relatives."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Hearing Krishna's words, Utanka was filled with severe rage. His eyes dilated in anger and he replied, "O Krishna! Though you were capable, you did not save the Kurus and the Pandavas, despite their being your matrimonial allies and you loving them. There is no doubt that I will curse you. O Madhusudana! You did not restrain them and force them to retreat. Therefore, in my wrath, I will curse you. Despite being capable and virtuous, you indulged in a false act. You were indifferent to the best among the Kurus and caused them to be destroyed." Vasudeva said, "O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! Listen in detail to what I have to say. O Bhargava! You are an ascetic. Nevertheless, listen to my entreaties. Having heard what I have to say about adhyatma, free me from the curse now. No man is capable of overwhelming me with a little bit of austerities. O supreme among those who meditate! I do not wish to destroy your austerities.[221] You have blazed in great austerities and you have satisfied your seniors. O supreme among brahmanas! Since childhood, you have observed brahmacharya. You have earned these austerities through hardships and I do not desire that they should be expended."'

## Chapter 1888(53)

'Utanka said, "O Keshava! Tell me the truth about unblemished adhyatma. O Janardana! After having heard you, I will decide whether I should curse you or not."

'Vasudeva replied, "Know that the three qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas that exist have me as a refuge. O brahmana! In that way, know that the Rudras and the Vasus have originated from me. All the beings are in me and I am in all the beings. Know that this is the state and you should not have any doubt about this. O brahmana! Know that all the large numbers of daityas, yakshas, rakshasas, serpents, gandharvas and apsaras originate from me. Everything that exists, everything that does not exist, the manifest, the unmanifest, the indestructible and the destructible—all these come from my soul. O sage! The dharma that has been laid down for the four ashramas and the rites for the gods—know that all these come from my soul. In the universe, there is the existent and the existent/non-existent.[222] However, I am supreme, beyond existence and non-existence. I am the eternal god of the gods and there is nothing superior to me. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Know me to be the Vedas and Omkara. I am the sacrificial stake. I am soma. I am the oblations that are offered to gods in sacrifices. I am the *hotar*.[223] O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! Know me also to be the oblations that are offered. I am the adhvaryu. I am the one who thinks of the supremely cleansed sacrificial libations. I am the udgatar. I am the one who is praised in the loud sounds of the chants. O brahmana! Know me to be atonement and the words of peace and benediction. I am always praised by the best of brahmanas as the creator of the universe. O supreme among brahmanas! Know Dharma to be my eldest son. O brahmana! It is out of compassion towards all creatures that I mentally created him out of my own self. I am present in men in the form of nivritti. O supreme among brahmanas! In the form

of fire, I move around in wombs. O Bhargava! In the three worlds, I assume those forms for the sake of protecting dharma and for the sake of establishing dharma. I am Vishnu. I am Brahma. I am Shakra. I am the origin and the end of all the different categories of beings. I am the creator and the destroyer. Among all those who practise adharma, I bind them down as the bridge of dharma, moving around from one yuga to another. In a desire to ensure the welfare of subjects, I enter various wombs. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! When I am born in a divine womb, there is no doubt that I follow all the acts followed by the gods. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! O Bhargava! In that way, when I am born in the womb of a gandharva, I then make all the efforts that are made by gandharvas. When I am in the womb of a serpent, I then behave like a serpent. When I am born in the wombs of yakshas and rakshasas, I then follow their kinds of conduct. Since I am now a human, I beseeched them piteously. However, because of the delusion that was engendered in them, they did not accept my beneficial words. I instructed the Kurus with the prospects of great fear and terrified them, overcome with rage.[224] Then I again assumed my earlier form[225] and instructed them. But they were addicted to adharma and were overwhelmed by the dharma of time. Following dharma, they have been slain in the battle and there is no doubt that they have gone to heaven. O supreme among brahmanas! In this world, the Pandavas obtained fame. I have thus recounted everything that you had asked me about."'

## Chapter 1889(54)

'Utanka said, "O Janardana! I know that you are the creator of the universe. There is no doubt that I know this because of your favours. O Achyuta! My mind is full of extremely calm sentiments. O scorcher of enemies! Know that my anger has ebbed away. O Janardana! If I truly deserve any favours from you, then show me a favour. I wish to see your divine form. Reveal it to me."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Pleased with him, he showed him the eternal Vaishnava form that the intelligent Dhananjaya had seen.[226] He saw the great-souled one's universal form, with giant arms. Having seen that universal form, the brahmana was filled with wonder.

'Utanka said, "With a form like this, you are the creator of the universe and I bow down before you. Your feet cover the earth and your head envelopes the firmament. The space between the firmament and the earth is covered by your stomach. O Achyuta! All the directions are covered by your arms. O god! Withdraw your supreme and indestructible form again. I wish to see your own eternal form again."'[227]

Vaishampayana continued, 'O Janamejaya! Govinda was pleased and spoke to him. He told Utanka, "Ask for a boon," who replied, "O immensely radiant one! O Krishna! This is boon enough that I have seen this splendid form of yours." However Krishna again said, "Do not think about this. This must be done, since the sight of me cannot be in vain." Utanka replied, "O lord! If you think this is needed, then it must be done. In the desert, it is extremely difficult to get water and I desire that there should be water, whenever I wish for it." At this, the lord withdrew his energy and spoke to Utanka. "Whenever you desire water, think of me." Having said this, he proceeded towards Dvaraka.

'On one occasion, the illustrious Utanka desired water. Wandering around in the desert, he was thirsty. Therefore, he remembered Achyuta. At this, the intelligent one saw a hunter in the desert.[228]

He was naked and was covered in mud. He was surrounded by a pack of dogs. He was fierce. A sword was girded to his waist and he wielded bow and arrows. O supreme among brahmanas! He[229] saw large quantities of water issuing from his genitals. When he remembered Krishna, the hunter smiled at him and said, “O Utanka! O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Accept this water from me. On seeing that you have been overcome by thirst, I have been overcome with great compassion for you.” Having been thus addressed, the sage did not wish to accept this water. The intelligent and eloquent one started to reprimand Achyuta. The hunter repeatedly urged him to drink. He was determined not to drink and his inner soul was agitated by rage. O great king! Refused by the great-souled one, the hunter vanished, with the dogs. On seeing this, Utanka’s mind was overcome with shame. He thought that Krishna, the slayer of enemies, had tempted him in this way. After this, the mighty-armed one[230] arrived along the same road, wielding a conch shell, a chakra and a club. Utanka said, “O Purushottama! You should not have offered water of this kind to me. O lord! I am the foremost of brahmanas and this was a hunter’s urine.” Thus addressed, the intelligent and immensely wise Janardana spoke these gentle words of assurance to Utanka. “I gave it to you in the form in which it should have been given. However, when I offered it to you, you did not understand. For your sake, I spoke to Purandara, the wielder of the vajra. I told him, ‘O lord! Offer Utanka amrita in the form of water.’ O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! Indra of the gods replied, ‘It is not proper that a mortal person should walk the path of the immortals. Grant some other boon and honour him.’ I again asked Shachi’s consort to offer amrita. However, seeking my favours, Indra of the gods again said, ‘O immensely radiant one! If amrita has to be indeed offered to the great-souled Bhargava, I will assume the form of a hunter and offer it to him. If Bhargava accepts the amrita from me, I will give it to him. O lord! However, if Bhargava refuses the amrita, I will go away and not grant it to Bhargava.’ In that form, Vasava concluded an agreement with me. He presented himself before you, but you refused the amrita he offered you. The illustrious and great one was in the form of a chandala and you committed a sin. But to satisfy your wish, I will again do what I can. I will make you successful and invincible through the water. O brahmana! Whenever you face a desire for water, clouds full of water will appear in this desert. O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! They will give you tasty water. Those clouds will be known as Utanka clouds and will become famous.” Thus addressed by Krishna, the brahmana was delighted. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Even today, Utanka clouds shower down in the desert.’

## Chapter 1890(55)

Janamejaya asked, ‘What austerities did the great ascetic Utanka perform? How could he desire to curse Vishnu? Vishnu is the source of all power.’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘O Janamejaya! Utanka performed great austerities. The energetic one was devoted to his preceptor and did not worship anyone else. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! All the sons of the rishis harboured the wish that they should be as devoted to their preceptors as Utanka was. O Janamejaya! Among the many disciples that he had, Goutama loved Utanka the most and was always affectionate towards him. Goutama was pleased because of his self-control, purity, valour,

deeds and proper conduct. Thousands of disciples received Goutama's permission.[231] However, because of his great affection for Utanka, he did not wish to let him go. O son! In the course of time, the great sage became aged. But because he was so devoted to his preceptor, the sage did not realize it. O Indra among kings! One day, he set out to fetch wood. Utanka was overwhelmed by that great burden of wood. O king! He was exhausted and hungry. O scorcher of enemies! Overwhelmed by carrying that great burden of wood, he flung it down on the ground. One of the locks of his matted hair, silvery in complexion, had got entangled in the wood. With the wood, it fell down on the ground. Bhargava was crushed by the burden and was afflicted by hunger. On seeing that sign of old age, he lamented in loud tones and wept. His preceptor's daughter possessed eyes that were like the petals of a lotus. Her hips were wide and her eyes were large. On the instructions of her father, with her head lowered, the one who knew about dharma received those drops in her hand. Those teardrops fell down on her hands and burnt them. Unable to hold those teardrops, she flung them down on the ground. Delighted in his mind, Goutama spoke to Utanka. "O son! Why is your mind overcome with grief now? O brahmana rishi! Tell me yourself. I wish to hear your words."

'Utanka answered, "My mind has been devoted to you and I have always sought to do what brings you pleasure. I have been faithful towards you and I have followed you. Without realizing it, I have aged. I have not experienced any happiness. I have resided with you for one hundred years, but you have not granted me permission.[232] You have granted leave to disciples who are younger than me. O best among brahmanas! Indeed, there have been hundreds and thousands of them."

'Goutama said, "O bull among brahmanas! Because of my affection towards you and because of your devotion towards your preceptor, a long period of time has elapsed and I have not realized it. O Bhargava! But if your mind has turned towards returning, you have my permission to go home. Leave without any delay."

'Utanka asked, "O supreme among brahmanas! Tell me, what will I give my preceptor?[233] O lord! After having gratified you, I will take your permission and leave."

'Goutama replied, "The virtuous have said that gratification of the preceptor is dakshina. O brahmana! There is no doubt that I have been satisfied by your conduct. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! Therefore, know that I am satisfied with you. O brahmana! Had you now been a young man sixteen years old, I would have given you my own daughter as your wife. There is no one else who is capable of tolerating your energy and serving you."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'At this, having taken his preceptor's permission, he became young and accepted the illustrious one. He next spoke to his preceptor's wife. "Instruct me. What will I give, so that I can satisfy my preceptor? I desire what is agreeable to you, even at the cost of riches and my life. Whatever is extremely rare in this world, whatever wonderful jewels exist, there is no doubt that I will use my austerities to bring all of that here." Ahalya[234] replied, "O son! Together with the illustrious one, I have always been content with you. Your devotion has been enough. O son! Go wherever you wish." O great king! But Utanka again spoke these words. "O mother! Command me. What task will bring you pleasure?" Ahalya replied, "It is known that Soudasa's wife possesses divine earrings. O fortunate one! For the sake of your preceptor, bring those here and perform a good deed." O Janamejaya! Having agreed to this, he departed. For the sake of bringing pleasure to his preceptor's wife, he wished to bring them. Utanka, bull among brahmanas, went swiftly. He went to

Soudasa, who had become a maneater, to beg those earrings from him.[235] Goutama told his wife, “Utanka is not to be seen today?” Thus asked, she told him that he had gone to fetch the earrings. He told his wife, “You have not acted properly. That king has been cursed and there is no doubt that he will kill the brahmana.” Ahalya replied, “O illustrious one! In my ignorance, I asked the brahmana to do this today. However, through your favours, he will not face any fear.” Thus addressed by his wife, Goutama agreed. In the desolate forest, Utanka saw the king.’

## Chapter 1891(56)

Vaishampayana said, ‘There, he saw the king, who had assumed a terrible form. His beard was long and it was smeared with the blood of humans. However, the brahmana wasn’t frightened. The immensely energetic king, the cause of terror, looked like Yama’s equal. He arose and said, “O supreme among brahmanas! It is good fortune and beneficial that you have come before me at the sixth hour, when I am about to hunt for food.”[236] Utanka replied, “O king! Know that I have wandered around and have come here for the sake of my preceptor. The learned ones have said that a person who is engaged in his preceptor’s task must not be injured.” The king said, “O supreme among brahmanas! The sixth hour has been ordained as a time for me to seek food. I am hungry now and am incapable of letting you go.” Utanka replied, “O great king! Fine, let you and me have an agreement. Having accomplished my preceptor’s task, I will again return and place myself under your control. O supreme among kings! O lord of men! I have heard that what I seek for my preceptor is owned by you. O Indra among kings! I beg that from you. You give all kinds of jewels to the best of brahmanas. You are a giver. O tiger among men! On earth, I am a fit person to receive. O supreme among kings! Know me to be a worthy recipient. O scorcher of enemies! I will take it from you and satisfy my preceptor by giving it to him. O Indra among kings! After that, following the agreement, I will return and place myself under your control. I only know the truth and have never resorted to falsehood. Since I have never uttered a lie, why shall I violate that rule now, even in jest?” Soudasa said, “If the object that you seek for your preceptor is something that I am fit to give and you are fit to receive, then tell me what that object is.” Utanka replied, “O bull among men! It is my view that you have always been a worthy person from whom one can receive. That is the reason I am begging the earrings from you.” Soudasa said, “O brahmana rishi! Those earrings are loved by my wife. O one with excellent vows! Think of some other boon and I shall grant that to you.” Utanka replied, “O king! Enough of this attempt to instruct me. If you want to demonstrate that you speak the truth, then give me those earrings.” Thus addressed, the king again spoke these words to Utanka. “O excellent one! Listen to my words. Go to the queen and ask her to give them to you. O best among brahmanas! There is no doubt that when you speak to the sweet-smiling one and tell her about my instructions, she will follow them and give you those earrings.” Utanka asked, “O lord of men! Where is your wife and how am I capable of meeting her? Why don’t you go to your wife and ask her yourself?” Soudasa said, “You will now find her near a waterfall in the mountains. It is now the sixth hour and I am incapable of seeing her.” O bull among the Bharata lineage! Utanka agreed to this and departed.

‘He saw Madayanti[237] and told her about his need. O Janamejaya! On hearing Soudasa’s words, the large-eyed one spoke to the immensely intelligent Utanka. “O brahmana! O unblemished one! It shall be that way. But I need to ensure that you are not lying. You should bring me some sign.[238] These earrings are divine and the gods, the yakshas and the giant serpents always desire to look for means to steal them. They watch out for opportunities. If they are placed on the ground, the serpents will steal the jewels and so will the supreme rishis. If the wearer eats leftovers, they will be taken away by the yakshas. If the wearer succumbs to sleep, they will be stolen by the gods. O bull among brahmanas! Whenever there are weaknesses, they are always capable of being stolen. The gods, rakshasas and the serpents look for a moment of carelessness. O supreme among brahmanas! During day and night, they produce gold. At night, they attract the radiance of the nakshatras and the stars. O illustrious one! The wearer is freed from hunger, thirst and fear. There is also no fear from poison, fire and predatory beasts. If the wearer is short, the earrings become short. If the wearer is tall, they also assume a similar kind of form. These are the characteristics of the earrings and they are worshipped. They are famous in the three worlds. Therefore, bring me some sign.”’

## Chapter 1892(57)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Utanka returned to his friend[239] and asked for a sign. The supreme one of the Ikshvaku lineage gave him a sign.

‘“‘Soudasa said, My present status cannot be tolerated. But there is no other escape. That being the case, it is my instruction that you should give the earrings away.”’[240]

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Thus addressed, Utanka went and told her what her husband had said. Hearing this, she gave him those earrings. Having obtained the earrings, he went to the king and said, “O king! I wish to hear the secret that was implicit in your words.”

‘Soudasa replied, “Since the time subjects were created, kshatriyas have worshipped brahmanas. But we have committed many sins towards brahmanas. I have always bowed down before brahmanas, but my present state is also because of a sin committed towards a brahmana. Without Madayanti’s aid, I do not perceive any other escape, whether it is in terms of advancing towards the gate of heaven or in this world. O supreme among brahmanas! In particular, a king who is against brahmanas is incapable of obtaining status in the world of men, or obtaining happiness after death. That is the reason I asked that the earrings you desired should be given to you. You should now successfully complete the agreement that you made with me.”

‘Utanka said, “O king! I will truly act that way and again place myself under your control. O scorcher of enemies! But there is a question I wish to ask you. Please answer the question.”

‘Soudasa replied, “O brahmana! Tell me what you wish. I will reply to your words. I will instantly dispel whatever doubt you have. There is no need to think about this.”

‘Utanka said, “Those who are learned and accomplished in their insight about the dharma to be followed vis-à-vis friends say that one who behaves unfairly towards friends is like a thief. O king! You have become my friend today. O supreme among intelligent ones! Therefore, use your

intelligence to give me proper advice. I have now obtained what I wanted and you are a maneater. Should I now come back before you or not?”[241]

‘Soudasa answered, “O supreme among the best of brahmanas! You should not ask me to answer this. O foremost among brahmanas! You should never return before me. O extender of the Bhrigu lineage! I can see that this is best for you. O brahmana! If you return, there is no doubt that you will die.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘He was thus addressed by the intelligent king about what was beneficial for him. Having obtained the king’s permission, he went to meet Ahalya. He grasped the divine earrings that were so desired by his preceptor’s wife. With great speed, he left for Goutama’s hermitage. He protected them in the way Madayanti had instructed. He carried the earrings after having bound them in black antelope skin. On one occasion, he was overcome by hunger. Afflicted by hunger, he saw a bilva tree that was heavy with the burden of fruit. O scorcher of enemies! The best among brahmanas hung the black antelope skin, with the earrings bound in them, to a branch and climbed the tree, so as to gather fruit. But the bond was loosened and the black antelope skin fell down on the ground. A certain serpent, born in the lineage of Airavata, saw the earrings and swiftly seized them in its mouth. With the earrings, it then entered a termite hill. On seeing that the earrings had been stolen by the serpernt, he was overcome by sorrow and great rage and quickly descended from the tree. Grasping a wooden stick, he began to dig up the termite hill. The bull among brahmanas was so overcome with rage that his limbs became hot. The earth was incapable of tolerating this force. Its limbs were severely afflicted by the wooden stick and it began to tremble. The brahmana rishi was still digging away on the surface of the ground. He had made up his mind that he would find a way to the world of the serpents. The immensely energetic wielder of the vajra came to the spot on a chariot that was yoked to tawny horses and saw the supreme among brahmanas. He assumed the form of a brahmana who was also grieving at Utanka’s sorrow and told him, “O son! This task of yours cannot be accomplished. The world of the serpents is thousands of yojanas away. I do not think your task can be undertaken with a wooden stick.”

‘Utanka replied, “O brahmana! O supreme among brahmanas! If I cannot get back the earrings from the world of the serpents, then, while you look on, I will cast aside my breath of life.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘The one with the vajra in his hand failed to dissuade him from the task he had set his mind on. Thereafter, he infused the wooden stick with the vajra weapon. O Janamejaya! The earth was shattered at being struck by the vajra and a path was created to the world of the serpents. Through that path he entered the world of the serpents and saw the world of the serpents, extending for thousands of yojanas. There were many celestial walls, adorned with pearls and jewels. O immensely fortunate one! These were made out of molten gold. There were tanks with crystal staircases leading down to them. There were rivers with sparkling water. He saw many trees, populated by large numbers of birds. The extender of the Bhrigu lineage saw the gate to that world. It was five yojanas high and one hundred yojanas wide. On seeing the world of the serpents, Utanka was distressed. O son! He lost all hope of getting the earrings back again. But a horse arrived. It was dark, with a white tail. O Kouravya! Its eyes were coppery in complexion and it blazed with energy. It said, “O brahmana! Blow into my apana duct.[242] You will then get back the earrings that were seized by Airavata’s son. O son! Do not hesitate. For your sake, this attempt will not be fruitless. When you

were in Goutama's hermitage, this is what you used to do." Utanka asked, "How did I know you in my preceptor's hermitage? I wish to hear how I earlier did what you have asked me to do now."

'The horse replied, "O son! Know that I am the blazing Jataveda,[243] your preceptor's preceptor. For the sake of your preceptor, you always worshipped me. O brahmana! O descendant of the Bhrigu lineage! You always purified yourself and worshipped me. That is the reason I will ensure your welfare. Do it without any delay."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Thus addressed by Chitrabhanu, Utanka did what he had been asked to. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The fire god was pleased with him. From the horse's pores, flames issued and blazed in the directions. Thick smoke billowed and caused terror in the world of the serpents. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O great king! That smoke suddenly increased and nothing could be seen in the world of the serpents. O Janamejaya! There were cries of lamentation everywhere in Airavata's abode, among the serpents, with Vasuki as the foremost. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Obstructed by the smoke, the residences could no longer be seen. They looked like forests and mountains that were enveloped in mist. They[244] were tormented by the energy of the fire. Because of the smoke, their eyes were red. They arrived before the infinitely energetic Bhargava to ascertain what had happened. They heard what had occurred from the greatly energetic maharshi and all of them honoured him in their minds, worshipping him with the appropriate rites. All the serpents, with the aged and the young at the forefront, joined their hands in salutation. They bowed their heads down and asked the illustrious one to be pacified. When the brahmana was pacified, they offered him water to wash his feet and a gift.[245] The serpents returned the greatly revered and divine earrings. The powerful Utanka was thus worshipped by the serpents. He circumambulated the fire and left for his preceptor's house. O king! He swiftly proceeded towards Goutama's residence. O unblemished one! He gave his preceptor's wife the divine earrings. O Janamejaya! In this way, the great-souled one roamed around the three worlds, for the divine earrings that had been stolen. O bull among the Bharata lineage! This was the power of the sage Utanka, about which you had asked me. He was supreme in austerities.'

## Chapter 1893(58)

Janamejaya asked, 'O supreme among brahmanas! After having granted the boon to Utanka, what did the immensely illustrious and mighty-armed Govinda do next?'

Vaishampayana replied, 'Having granted the boon to Utanka, Govinda left for Dvaraka on extremely swift and large horses, accompanied by Satyaki. Having passed over lakes, rivers and many kinds of forests, he arrived at the beautiful city of Dvaravati. O great king! When Pundarikaksha reached, followed by Yuyudhana, it was time for the festival of Raivataka. The mountain was ornamented in many colourful ways.[246] O bull among men! All the roads were paved with gold. The summit of the great mountain was decorated with extremely pleasant and golden garlands and so were the houses. There were kalpavrikshas everywhere.[247] There were golden lamps on the trees and it was a beautiful sight. Even the caves and the waterfalls shone, as if it was day. There were colourful flags, decorated with bells, in every direction. There were the melodious notes of men

and women singing. It was beautiful to see, like Meru inhabited by large numbers of sages. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The women and the men were cheerful and intoxicated. They sang on that Indra among mountains and the sound seemed to touch heaven. The place was full of these excited people, mad with delight and intoxicated. Extremely beautiful and cheerful sounds could be heard. There were excellent shops and stalls, filled with food that could be tasted and swallowed. There were garments and garlands. There was the sound of veenas, flutes and drums. Food that could be tasted and swallowed was mixed with sura and *maireya*.[248] Gifts were incessantly offered to the distressed, the blind and the miserable. Because of these supremely beneficial acts, the giant mountain seemed to be greater still. O brave one! Many auspicious abodes had been erected there and the virtuous ones resided there. Thus did the brave ones from the Vrishni lineage enjoy the festival of Raivataka. Surrounded by all these residences, the mountain looked like the world of the gods. O bull among the Bharata lineage! On Krishna's arrival, that king of mountains looked like Shakra's residence. Honoured, Govinda entered an auspicious residence and Satyaki also went to his own home. Cheerful, he[249] entered after a long period of residence away from home. Like Vasava among the danavas, he had performed many extremely difficult deeds. The Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas came forward to meet the great-souled Varshneya, like the gods meeting Shatakratu. The intelligent one honoured them and asked about their welfare. Delighted, he greeted his father and his mother. The mighty-armed one was embraced and comforted by them. Surrounded by all the Vrishnis, he then sat down. When the greatly energetic one had washed his feet and had rested, Krishna was asked by his father and told him about the great battle.'

## Chapter 1894(59)

'Vasudeva said, "O Varshneya! I have heard about the supremely wonderful battle. O son! Men have always spoken about it. O immensely wise one! But you were a direct witness and a participant. O unblemished one! Therefore, speak about the battle accurately. How was the battle that involved the great-souled Pandavas, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa, Drona, Shalya and the other excellent ones, all the other large numbers of kshatriyas who were accomplished in the use of weapons and those who wore diverse kinds of garments and were the residents of many different countries?"'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Thus addressed, in the presence of his father and his mother, Pundarikaksha recounted how the brave ones among the Kurus had been slain in the battle.

'Krishna[250] said, "The great-souled kshatriyas performed extremely wonderful deeds. There were such a large number of these that one is incapable of recounting all of them in hundreds of years. Listen. I will tell you about the most important elements of the encounter, about what those lords of the earth exactly did. Bhishma was the overall commander for Kouravya, like Vasava for the gods, and there were eleven chiefs of the Kouravya army under him.[251] Shikhandi was the leader of the seven chiefs of armies of the sons of Pandu.[252] The intelligent one was protected by the intelligent Savyasachi. The battle between the great-souled Kurus and Pandavas went on for ten days.[253] It was so great that it made the body hair stand up. After this, in the great battle, Shikhandi fought against Gangeya and struck him with many arrows, aided by the wielder of Gandiva. After this, the sage lay

down on a bed of arrows. He waited for dakshinayana to be over and gave up his life in uttarayana. Then Drona, supreme among those who know about weapons, became the commander. For the Indra among the Kouravas, the brave one was like Kavya for the lord of the daityas.[254] The supreme of brahmanas was surrounded by the nine akshouhinis that were left. He prided himself in battle and was protected by Kripa, Vrisha[255] and the others. Dhrishtadyumna, who knew about great weapons, became the leader of the Pandavas. He was protected by the energetic Bhima, like Varuna by Mitra. The great-minded one was surrounded by five armies[256] and wished to get at Drona. He remembered the ill treatment of his father[257] and performed great deeds in the battle. In that clash between Drona and Parshata, many brave kings who had come from various directions were mostly destroyed. That supremely terrible battle lasted for five days. After this, Drona was exhausted and was subjugated by Dhrishtadyumna. Next, Karna became the commander of Duryodhana's forces. He was surrounded by the five akshouhinis that still remained in the battle. Three armies were left for the sons of Pandu and they were protected by Bibhatsu. Many brave ones had been killed. The remaining ones clashed. The suta's son fought a terrible battle against Partha and clashed against him, like an insect headed towards a fire. He was slain on the second day. When Karna was killed, the Kouravas lost their spirits and their energy was destroyed. The remaining three akshouhinis surrounded the lord of Madra. With many mounts slain, the remaining one akshouhini of the Pandavas was also cheerless. However, they faithfully surrounded Yudhishthira. Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, peformed an extremely difficult deed. Before half of the day was over, he slew the king of Madra. When Shalya was killed, the great-minded and infinitely valorous Sahadeva killed Shakuni, who was responsible for the dissension. When Shakuni was killed, the extremely evil-minded king who was Dhritarashtra's son saw that most of the soldiers had been slain and fled, with a club in his hand. The powerful Bhimasena angrily rushed after him. He found him inside the waters of Lake Dvaipayana. From every direction, the remaining soldiers surrounded him. After he had hidden in the lake, the five Pandavas were delighted at having discovered him. Though he was submerged in the water, the arrows of their words swiftly and severely injured him. He rose up and prepared to fight, with a club in his hand. In that great encounter, the king who was Dhritarashtra's son was slain. Many kings witnessed Bhimasena's valour. After this, the Pandava soldiers were sleeping in their camp in the night. Intolerant because his father had been killed, they were slain by Drona's son. Their sons were killed. Their soldiers were killed. Their friends were killed. I, Yuyudhana as the second, and the five Pandavas are the only ones who remain. With Kripa and Bhoja,[258] Drona's son is the only one who escaped from the Kourava side. Having sought refuge with the Pandavas, Yuyutsu also escaped. Suyodhana, Indra among the Kouravas, was killed, with his followers, and Vidura and Sanjaya presented themselves before Dharmaraja. O lord! Thus did the great battle rage for eighteen days. Those lords of the earth were slain and began to reside in heaven."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O great king! On hearing the account that made the body hair stand up, the Vrishnis were overcome by grief, misery and sorrow.'

## Chapter 1895(60)

Vaishampayana said, 'The powerful Krishna recounted the story of the Mahabharata battle before his father. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The brave one glossed over Abhimanyu's death. The great-minded one did not wish Vasudeva to hear something that was unpleasant. On hearing about the death of his daughter's son, Vasudeva would have been tormented by great sorrow and grief. That is what the immensely intelligent one thought. Subhadra noticed that the matter of her son's death in the battle had been passed over. She said, "O Krishna! Recount the account of the death of Subhadra's son," and fell down on the ground. Vasudeva saw that she had fallen down on the ground. On seeing that she had fallen down, he was overcome by grief and also lost his senses. O great king! Vasudeva was overwhelmed by sorrow and grief at his daughter's son having been killed. He spoke these words to Krishna. "O Pundarikaksha! It is true that you are famous as one who is truthful in speech. O slayer of enemies! Why did you now not tell me about my daughter's son having been killed? O lord! Tell me the truth about how your sister's son was slaughtered. His eyes were like yours. How could he have been killed by the enemy in battle? O Varshneya! It is always impossible for men to die before their time has come. Despite the grief, that is the reason why my heart has not shattered into a hundred fragments. At the time of the battle, what did he tell his mother, Subhadra? O Pundarikaksha! He was my beloved. What did the one with the restless eyes say to me? Was he slain by the enemy in the battle when he had turned his back towards them? O Govinda! I hope his face wasn't distorted when he fought against them. O Krishna! He was immensely energetic and because of his childish sentiments, boasted in my presence. The lord spoke about his being victorious. When he was slain and was lying down on the ground, was that child mangled by Drona, Karna, Kripa and the others? O Keshava! Tell me. In an encounter, he always used to challenge Drona, Bhishma, Karna and the supreme of charioteers. He was my daughter's son." Extremely miserable, he thus lamented in many different ways.

'Govinda spoke these words to his grieving father. "In the forefront of the battle, he never distorted his face. Though the battle was extremely difficult, he did not show his back. He killed hundreds and thousands of assembled kings. He was then afflicted by Drona and Karna and subjugated by Duhshasana's son. O lord! If they had always fought against him one by one, no one would have been able to kill him in the battle, not even the wielder of the vajra. At that time, in the encounter, Partha had been challenged by the *samshaptakas* and Drona and the others angrily surrounded him in the battle. O father! In the encounter, he created an extremely great carnage among the enemy. O Varshneya! After this, your daughter's son was brought down by Duhshasana's son. O immensely wise one! Conquer your sorrow. There is no doubt that he has gone to heaven. Confronted with a hardship, a man should never yield to lassitude. In the battle, he countered Drona, Karna and the others. He was like the great Indra. Why will he not have gone to heaven? O invincible one! Vanquish this grief. Do not yield to intolerance. The conqueror of enemy cities has gone to the destination meant for those who have been purified by weapons. That is the way my sister Subhadra's brave son was killed. She was afflicted by grief. When she met Pritha, she shrieked like a female osprey. When she met Droupadi, she sorrowfully asked, 'O noble one! Where are all our sons? I wish to see them.' On hearing her words, all the Kuru women embraced her in their arms. Extremely miserable, all of them lamented. On seeing Uttara, she asked, 'O fortunate one! Where has your husband gone? When he returns, without any delay, let me know. O Virata's daughter! In earlier times, as soon as he heard

my voice, he used to swiftly appear before me. Where is your husband now? O Abhimanyu! Your *maharatha* maternal uncles are well. All of them used to ask you about your welfare when you returned from a battle. O scorcher of enemies! As was the case earlier, tell me what happened in the encounter today. I am lamenting? Why are you not answering me today?' At that time, the daughter of the Varshneya lineage lamented in this way. Pritha was also extremely miserable. On hearing this, Pritha spoke these gentle words. 'O Subhadra! In the battle, he was protected by Vasudeva,[259] Satyaki and his father. Despite this, the child has followed the dharma of time and has been killed. This is the dharma of those who are mortal. O daughter of the Yadu lineage! Do not grieve. Your son was unassailable and has gone to the supreme destination. You have been born in a great lineage of great-souled kshatriyas. O one with the restless eyes! O one with eyes like lotus petals! Do not sorrow. Look towards Uttara. She is expecting. O fortunate one! Do not grieve. This beautiful one will soon give birth to a son.' O extender of the Yadu lineage! Kunti comforted her in this way. O invincible one! Casting aside her sorrow and with the permission of the king,[260] Bhima and the twins, who are like Yama, the one who knows about dharma[261] then began to think about his funeral rites and gave away large quantities of gifts. O extender of the Yadu lineage! She gave many cattle away to brahmanas. The daughter of the Vrishni lineage[262] summoned Virata's daughter and told her, 'O Virata's daughter! O illustrious one! One should not lament. O one with the wide hips! For your husband's sake, protect the child that is in your womb.' O immensely radiant one! After saying these words, Kunti stopped. With her permission, I have brought Subhadra here. O Madhava! This is the way your daughter's son was killed. O invincible one! Conquer your misery. Do not have any grief in your mind."'

## Chapter 1896(61)

Vaishampayana said, 'In this way, Shura's son heard the words of his son. The one with dharma in his soul abandoned his grief and performed a supreme funeral ceremony. He[263] was always loved by his father. With his wife, the great-souled Vasudeva performed the funeral rites for him. The mighty-armed one fed six million brahmanas. He fed them many kinds of food that possessed all the qualities. The mighty-armed Krishna satisfied all the thirst the brahmanas possessed for riches and this made the body hair stand up. There was gold, cattle, beds and garments. These were given away to the brahmanas and they said, "Let these increase more." Dasharha Vasudeva,[264] Baladeva and Satyaki, together with Satyaka,[265] performed the funeral rites for Abhimanyu. They were tormented by great grief and could not find any peace.

'In the city of Nagasahvya, the brave Pandavas were also in a similar situation. Separated from Abhimanyu, they could not find any tranquility. O Indra among kings! Virata's daughter did not eat for many days. On account of her husband, she suffered greatly. However, the child in her womb had to be protected. Using his divine sight, Vyasa got to know and arrived there. Having arrived, the intelligent and greatly energetic one spoke to the large-eyed Pritha and to Uttara. "O illustrious one! Abandon this grief. An immensely energetic son will be born to you, because of Vasudeva's powers and because of what I have said. When the Pandavas are dead, he will protect the earth." O descendant

of the Bharata lineage! In Dharmaraja's presence, he looked towards Dhananjaya and spoke to him, gladdening him. "O mighty-armed one! A great-minded grandson will be born to you. He will rule the earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. O best among the Kurus! O afflicter of enemies! Therefore, conquer your grief. There is no need to think about this. This will truly happen. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Krishna, the brave one among the Vrishni lineage, said this earlier and this will indeed happen. There is no need to reflect on this. O son! You should not sorrow about him[266] or any of the other Kurus. They have earned and gone to the indestructible worlds of the gods." Dhananjaya, with dharma in his soul, was thus addressed by his grandfather. O great king! He abandoned his grief and became cheerful. O one who knows about dharma! O immensely wise one! As time passed, your father began to grow in the womb, like the moon during shuklapaksha. Vyasa urged the king who was Dharma's son to perform a horse sacrifice and vanished. The intelligent Dharmaraja heard Vyasa's words. He made up his mind that a journey should be undertaken to obtain the requisite riches.'

## Chapter 1897(62)

Janamejaya asked, 'O brahmana! On hearing the words spoken by the great-souled Vyasa, what steps did the king take towards performing the horse sacrifice? Marutta's riches were buried inside the ground. O supreme among brahmanas! How did he obtain those? Tell me that.'

Vaishampayana said, 'At that time, hearing Dvaipayana's words, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira summoned all his brothers and spoke these words to Arjuna, Bhimasena and Madri's sons, the twins. "O brave ones! You have heard the words the great-souled one affectionately addressed to us. The intelligent Krishna[267] said this, desiring the welfare of the Kurus. Vyasa is great in his power of austerities and is wonderful in his deeds. His conduct is full of dharma and he desires the prosperity of his relatives. He is our preceptor. O Pandavas! Remember what the immensely wise Bhishma and the intelligent Govinda told us. I wish to properly follow those. If we act in accordance with those words, there will be welfare for all of us. They know about the brahman and following their words will bring benefit. O extenders of the Kuru lineage! All the riches of this earth have now been destroyed. O kings! Therefore, Vyasa told us about Marutta's many riches. If you think that those riches are sufficient, how will we bring them here? O Bhima! What do you think?" O extender of the Kuru lineage! The king spoke these words then. Bhimasena joined his hands in salutation and spoke these words to the best of kings. "O mighty-armed one! I like what you have said about bringing the riches here, citing what Vyasa had said. O lord! O great king! If we obtain the riches of Avikshit's son, we will be successful. That is my view. O fortunate one! We will bow down before the great-souled Girisha, worship Kapardin and bring the riches here. We will certainly gratify the lord who is the god of the gods and his followers, in words, thoughts and deeds, seek their favours and bring the riches here. The servants who protect those riches are terrible to see. However, if the one with the bull on his banner is pleased, they will be controlled." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On hearing the words spoken by Bhima, the king who was Dharma's son was pleased. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In joy, he spoke to Arjuna and the others that this is what should be done.

‘All the Pandavas made up their minds that the riches should be brought. They instructed the soldiers that they should set out under a good nakshatra and on Dhruva’s day.[268] The brahmanas pronounced words of benediction and the sons of Pandu set out. Before that, they worshipped Maheshvara, the best of the gods. They offered the great-souled one sweetmeats, payasam, meat and cakes and left in high spirits. As they set out, the foremost among brahmanas and the citizens cheerfully pronounced auspicious words of benediction. Pandu’s sons circumambulated the brahmanas and the sacrificial fire, bowing their heads down. They then set out. They sought the permission of King Dhritarashtra, who was afflicted by sorrow on account of his sons, his wife and the large-eyed Pritha. They were honoured by the citizens and learned brahmanas. Kouravya Yuyutsu, Dhritarashtra’s son, remained in charge of the capital.’

## Chapter 1898(63)

Vaishampayana said, ‘They cheerfully set out, with delighted men and mounts. The loud roar of the chariots filled the earth. Bards, minstrels and raconteurs chanted songs of praise. They were accompanied by their own soldiers, like the sun by its rays. With a white umbrella held aloft his head, Yudhishthira looked lustrous, like the king of the stars[269] on the night of the full moon. As Pandava proceeded along the road, men joyfully pronounced benedictions of victory. As is appropriate, the bull among men accepted these. O king! There were soldiers who followed the king and their clamour rose up into the sky and filled it. The great king passed through lakes, rivers, forests and groves and arrived at the mountain. O Indra among kings! The best of riches was buried at the spot and with his soldiers, King Pandava arrived there. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! That plain region was auspicious. The brahmanas, full of austerities and knowledge of the Vedas, were placed at the forefront. King Kouravya placed Agniveshya,[270] the priest, accomplished in the Vedas and the Vedangas, ahead of the brahmanas. Following the ordinances, the rites of peace were performed and all of them surrounded the spot. Following the rites, the king and his advisers were in the middle. The brahmanas indicated that the camp should be laid out with six roads and nine divisions.[271] A separate encampment was properly erected for the crazy kings among elephants.

‘Having done all this, the Indra among kings addressed the brahmanas. “O best among brahmanas! For this task, determine an auspicious nakshatra and day. Decide what you truly think to be the most opportune time. However, we should not spend a long period of time here. O Indra among brahmanas! Having determined this, decide what should be done next.” Hearing the king’s words, the brahmanas and the priest were delighted. Wishing to ensure pleasure to Dharmaraja, they spoke these words. “Today’s nakshatra is extremely auspicious and is the best for undertaking this task. O king! Today, we will reside here, surviving only on water. You should also not eat today.” Hearing the words of the excellent brahmanas, the Indras among men fasted during the night. They happily slept on beds made out of kusha grass, like fires that blaze at the time of a sacrifice. Throughout the night, the great-souled ones listened to the words spoken by the brahmanas. When the clear morning dawned, the bulls among brahmanas spoke to the king who was Dharma’s son.’

## Chapter 1899(64)

'The brahmanas said, "Let rites be performed for the great-souled Tryambaka. O king! When these rites have been performed, we will endeavour to accomplish your objective."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Hearing the words of the brahmanas, as is proper, Yudhishthira performed rites for Girisha. Following the ordinances, the priest offered cleansed clarified butter and *charu* sanctified with mantras as libations to the fire. O lord of men! Cheerfully, he accepted sweetmeats, payasam, meat and other offerings sanctified by mantras and offered them to the powerful one. He was accomplished in the Vedas and happy in his mind. He offered all kinds of colourful garlands and cleansed and parched rice, as has been recommended. After that, he rendered offerings to the servants of that extremely powerful one. Offerings were also rendered to Kubera, Indra among the yakshas, Manibhadra and all the other yakshas who were the lords of the bhutas. O king! There was krisara mixed with meat and other oblations mixed with sesamum.[272] That spot of the god of the gods was beautiful. Worship was performed for all of Rudra's ganas. Placing Vyasa at the forefront, the king advanced towards the store of riches. He worshipped the lord of riches and bowed his head down before him. With a cheerful mind, colourful vessels full of krisara were offered to him.[273] Worship was rendered to Shankha and Nidhi and all the guardians of riches by the valiant one[274] and also to the foremost of brahmanas. Strengthened by their auspicious benedictions and full of energy, the best among the Kuru lineage happily began to dig for the riches. Dharmaraja Yudhishthira dug out many thousands of colourful and beautiful vessels made out of iron—utensils, jugs, pitchers, pans, pots and jars. These were then placed in giant chests with lids. O king! The king had three hundred thousand of these vessels placed at either end of a pole. O lord of the earth! Arrangements were made for the wealth of Pandu's son to be borne. There were sixty thousand camels and one hundred and twenty thousand horses. O great king! There were one hundred thousand excellent elephants. There were similar numbers of carts, chariots and she-elephants. There was no count of the number of mules and men. That was the amount of riches that Yudhishthira caused to be dug up. Each load amounted to twenty four thousand coins, sixteen thousand plus eight thousand.[275] Collecting all this wealth, Pandava again worshipped Mahadeva and set out for the city of Nagasahvya. With Dvaipayana's permission, he placed the priest at the forefront. The bull among men marched a distance of a *govyuti* every day, setting up camp accordingly.[276] With that large army, the king advanced towards the city. They suffered because of the burden of the riches. However, the extenders of the Kuru lineage were delighted.'

## Chapter 1900(65)

Vaishampayana said, 'Meanwhile, accompanied by the Vrishnis, the valiant Vasudeva arrived at the city of Varanasahvya. When he had left for his own city, Dharma's son had told him that the bull among men should return when he knew that it was time for the horse sacrifice. He was accompanied by Rukmini's son,[277] Yuyudhana, Charudeshna, Samba, Gada, Kritavarma, the brave Sarana, Nishatha

and Ulmuka, with Baladeva leading the way. Subhadra was also with him. They came to see and comfort Droupadi, Uttara, Pritha and all the other kshatriya women whose husbands had been slain. On seeing that they had come, King Dhritarashtra and the great-minded Vidura received and welcomed them in the proper way. Worshipped by the greatly energetic Vidura and Yuyutsu, Krishna, bull among men, resided there. O Janamejaya! The brave ones among the Vrishni lineage dwelt there.

'O king! Your father, Parikshit, the slayer of enemy heroes, was born. O great king! That king had been afflicted by the *brahmastra*.[278] He was born as a lifeless corpse and this increased both joy and grief. On hearing that he was born, loud roars of joy, like those of lions, were let out. That sound penetrated all the directions, but soon stopped.[279] At this, Krishna swiftly entered the inner quarters. His senses and mind were distressed and Yuyudhana was with him. He saw that his father's sister[280] was quickly advancing. As she rushed forward, she wept and repeatedly called out to Vasudeva. Droupadi and the illustrious Subhadra were behind her. O king! They, and all the female relatives, wept piteously. O tiger among kings! Kunti, the daughter of a king, met Krishna. She spoke in a voice that was choking with tears. "O Vasudeva! O mighty-armed one! Having given birth to you, Devaki has come to be known as an excellent mother. You are our destination and our refuge. This lineage depends on you. O brave one of the Yadu lineage! O lord! This is the son of your sister's son. Because of Ashvatthama, he has been born dead. O Keshava! Revive him. O descendant of the Yadu lineage! This is what you had promised when the blade of grass was released. 'O lord! The child will be born dead, but I will revive him.' O son![281] O bull among men! Behold. The child has been born dead. O Madhava! Look at Uttara, Subhadra, Droupadi and me and also at Dharma's son, Bhima, Phalguna, Nakula and Sahadeva. O invincible one! You should save all of us. The breath of life of the Pandavas and of me is in the child. O Dasharha! He will offer the funeral cakes for Pandu and for my father-in-law. O fortunate one! Abhimanyu was your beloved and like you. O Janardana! You should now do what brings pleasure here and in the hereafter. O slayer of enemies! Uttara recounts the beloved words spoken to her by Abhimanyu. O Krishna! There is no doubt that she loves those words. O Dasharha! In earlier times, this is what Arjuna's son told Virata's daughter. 'O fortunate one! Your son will be reared in the family of my maternal uncle. He will go to the lineage of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas and learn *dhanurveda*. He will learn about wonderful weapons and also about the sacred texts of good policy.' O son! This is what Subhadra's son, the slayer of enemy heroes, said in love. The invincible one spoke these words and there is no doubt about this. O Madhusudana! For his sake, we are bowing down our heads and beseeching you. For the welfare of the lineage, act so as to ensure this supreme benefit." Thus did the large-eyed Pritha speak to Varshneya. Having said this, she raised her arms up and, with the other women, fell down on the ground. O great king! All the women had tears in their eyes. O lord! They lamented, "The son of Vasudeva's sister's son has been born dead." When Kunti spoke in this way, Janardana seized her. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! He raised her from the ground and comforted her.'

## Chapter 1901(66)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Pritha was raised. On seeing her brother, Subhadra was stricken by grief. She lamented loudly and said, “O Pundarikaksha! Behold the intelligent Partha’s grandson. His life has been destroyed and the lineage of the Kurus has decayed. Drona’s son raised a blade of grass for the sake of Bhimasena. But it descended on Uttara, Vijaya and me. O Keshava! It blazed and is still impaled in my heart. O invincible one! O lord! Behold my son’s son. What will Dharmaraja Yudhishthira, with dharma in his soul, say? What about Bhimasena, Arjuna and Madravati’s sons? O Varshneya! On hearing that Abhimanyu’s son has been born dead, the Pandavas will think that they have been deceived by Drona’s son. O Krishna! There is no doubt that Abhimanyu was loved by his fathers. On hearing that they have been vanquished by the weapon of Drona’s son, what will they say? They will be overcome by supreme grief. O Janardana! What do you think? O Krishna! O scorcher of enemies! Abhimanyu’s son has been born dead. O Krishna! I seek your favours. I am bowing down my head before you now. O Purushottama! Look towards Pritha and Droupadi. O Madhava! O slayer of enemies! When Drona’s son slew the foetuses of the Pandava women, you wrathfully said, ‘O worst of men! O one who does not deserve to be a brahmana! I will render your desire unsuccessful. I will bring back the son of Kiriti’s son to life.’ O invincible one! Hearing these words and knowing your strength, I am seeking your favours. Let Abhimanyu’s son be brought back to life. O tiger of the Vrishni lineage! Having pledged, if you do not act in accordance with your auspicious words and make them successful and listen to my entreaties, I will kill myself. O brave one! O invincible one! If Abhimanyu’s son is not brought back to life while you are still alive and present, what have you done for us? O invincible one! Bring Abhimanyu’s son back to life, like rain from the clouds revives crops. O brave one! His eyes are like his.[282] O Keshava! You have dharma in your soul. You are truthful. Truth is your valour. O scorcher of enemies! You should make your words true. If you so wish, you can make all the dead ones in the three worlds come back to life, not to speak of the son of your beloved sister’s son, who has been born dead. O Krishna! I know your powers. That is the reason I am speaking to you. Perform this great favour for the sons of Pandu. O mighty-armed one! I am your sister and my son has been killed. I have sought refuge with you. Knowing this, you should show me this compassion.”’

## Chapter 1902(67)

Vaishampayana said, ‘O Indra among kings! Thus addressed and senseless with grief, the slayer of Keshi signified his assent. When he said this, all the people were delighted. The bull among men spoke these words to the people and they rejoiced, like those who are suffering from sweat recovering through a sprinkling of water. O tiger among men! He quickly entered the quarters where your father had been born. In the proper way, it was sanctified with white garlands. In every direction, pots completely full of water were arrayed. O mighty-armed one! There was *tinduka*[283] wood sprinkled with clarified butter. There were mustard seeds. Sparkling weapons and fires were arranged on every side. There were pleasant and aged women as attendants. O brave one! All around, there were skilled and accomplished physicians. The energetic one also saw many objects designed to destroy rakshasas laid around, placed there by people who were accomplished in such matters. On

seeing that the room where your father was born had been readied in this way, Hrishikesha was delighted and spoke words of appreciation. With a cheerful face, Varshneya said this. Droupadi quickly went to Virata's daughter and spoke these words. "O fortunate one! Your father-in-law, Madhusudana, has come here. He is the ancient rishi whose soul cannot be comprehended. The unvanquished one has approached." The queen[284] controlled her tears. She covered herself and glanced towards Krishna, the way one looks towards a god. The ascetic lady's heart was shattered. On seeing that Govinda was approaching, she lamented piteously, in a voice that choked with tears. "O Pundarikaksha! Behold. We have been deprived of this child. O Janardana! It is as if both Abhimanyu and I have been killed. O Varshneya! O slayer of Madhu! O brave one! I am bowing down my head and seeking your favours. My son has been burnt by the weapon of Drona's son. Revive him. O lord! O Pundarikaksha! At that time, had Dharmaraja, Bhimasena or you said, 'Let the blade of grass destroy the unconscious mother,' I would have been destroyed and this disaster would not have occurred. The child in the womb has been destroyed by the brahmastra. Drona's evil-minded son has perpetrated a cruel deed. What purpose has been served by that? O slayer of enemies! She is now bowing down her head and seeking your favours. O Govinda! If you do not revive him, I will cast aside my life. O virtuous one! Many of my wishes are based on him. O Keshava! If he is slain by Drona's son, why should I remain alive? O Krishna! O Janardana! It was my hope that I would honour you with him on my lap, but that has been destroyed. O bull among men! This son of the one with the restless eyes[285] has been killed. O Krishna! All the wishes in my heart have become futile. O Madhusudana! You loved the one with the restless eyes. Look at his son, brought down by the brahmastra. He is ungrateful and cruel, just like his father. Having cast aside the prosperity of the Pandavas, he has now gone to Yama's abode. O Keshava! O brave one! When Abhimanyu was slain in the forefront of the battle, I had pledged that I would soon follow him. O Krishna! But I didn't do that. I am cruel and love life. If I go there and meet him now, what will Phalguna's son say?"'

## Chapter 1903(68)

Vaishampayana said, 'The ascetic lady lamented piteously, as if she was mad. Desiring her son, the miserable Uttara then fell down on the ground. On seeing that she had fallen down, with her son dead and her clothing dishevelled, Kunti and all the other Bharata women were afflicted by grief and shrieked out. O king! In a short while, the residence of the Pandavas was no longer a sight to be seen. It echoed with sounds of lamentation. O Indra among kings! O brave one! Virata's daughter was afflicted by sorrow on account of her son. She suffered from unconsciousness. O bull among the Bharata lineage! But in a short while, Uttara regained her senses. She placed her son on her lap and spoke these words. "You are the son of one who knew about dharma. But you do not understand the adharma you have committed. You are not greeting the brave one from the Vrishni lineage. O son! Go and tell your father my words. 'O brave one! It is impossible for beings to die before their time has come. I am separated from you. I do not have a husband, or a son. Yet I am alive on this earth, though I should be dead. O mighty-armed one! Perhaps I will take Dharmaraja's permission and consume terrible poison. Perhaps I will enter the fire.' O son![286] Perhaps death is extremely difficult

to obtain. Despite being deprived of my husband and my son, my heart has not shattered into one thousand fragments. O son! Arise. Behold your miserable great grandmother. She is afflicted and miserable. She is immersed in an ocean of grief. Behold the noble Panchali and the ascetic Satvati.[287] Look at me. I am extremely miserable, like a deer that has been pierced by a hunter. Arise. Behold the face of the intelligent protector of the worlds.[288] His eyes are restless and like lotus petals. He is in front of you." Uttara lamented in this way and fell down again. On seeing this, all the women raised her up again. The daughter of the king of Matsya was raised and resorted to her fortitude. While still on the ground, she joined her hands in salutation and greeted Pundarikaksha. The bull among men heard her great lamentations. Krishna touched water and withdrew brahmastra's powers. Dasharha had promised that he would bring him back to life. The one with the pure soul spoke these words, so that the entire universe could hear. "O Uttara! I do not utter a falsehood. This will come true. While all the creatures look on, I will revive him. I have never spoken a lie earlier, not even in jest. Never have I retreated in battle. Therefore, he will come back to life. I love dharma and I specially love brahmanas. Abhimanyu's son was born dead. But let him revive. There has never been a conflict between me and Vijaya. Through the virtue of that truth, let this dead child come back to life. Since truth and dharma have always been established in me, let this dead child come back to life. I killed Kamsha and Keshi by resorting to dharma. Because of that truth, let his child again come back to life." O bull among the Bharata lineage! O great king! When Vasudeva spoke in this way, the child regained its senses and gradually began to move.'

## Chapter 1904(69)

Vaishampayana said, 'Krishna thus withdrew the power of brahmastra and that room was illuminated through your father's energy. All the rakshasas were rebuffed and forced to leave that house. An invisible voice was heard to speak in the firmament, "O Keshava! Excellent." The blazing weapon returned to the grandfather. O lord of men! Your father again got back his life. Appropriate to its capacity and its strength, the child began to move. O king! At this, the Bharata women were delighted. On Govinda's instructions, the brahmanas pronounced benedictions. Everyone was delighted and praised Janardana. The wives of the lions among the Bharatas were like those who acquire a boat and reach the shore. Kunti, Drupada's daughter, Subhadra and Uttara and the wives of the other lions among men were cheerful in their minds. Wrestlers, actors, fighters, narrators, *soukhashayikas*[289] and large numbers of bards and minstrels praised Janardana. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They pronounced praises and benedictions for the Kuru lineage. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! At the right time, Uttara was raised and she and her son cheerfully greeted the descendant of the Yadu lineage. Delighted, the lord who was a tiger among the Vrishni lineage gave away many gems and so did the others. Janardana, devoted to the truth, named your father. He said, "Since Abhimanyu's son was born when the lineage had decayed, his name will be Parikshit."[290] O lord of men! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! In course of time, your father grew up and gladdened the minds of all the people. O brave one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When your father was a month old, the Pandavas returned, having collected a great deal of riches.[291]

On hearing that they were approaching, the bulls among the Vrishni lineage went out. The men decorated Nagasahvya with large numbers of garlands. There were colourful flags and diverse kinds of standards. O lord of men! The citizens decorated their houses. On Vidura's instructions and to bring pleasure to the sons of Pandu, many kinds of worship were performed in the temples. The royal roads were ornamented in beautiful ways. The beautiful city resounded with a noise that was like the roar of the ocean. There were the sounds of dancers dancing and singers singing. The city seemed to be like Vaishravana's[292] abode. O king! There were bards and thousands of curious women in every direction. Stirred by the wind, the flags fluttered, as if pointing out the southern and the northern directions to the Kurus. The royal officers announced that it was a time for festivities. Since the riches had been obtained, the festivities would last throughout the night.'

## Chapter 1905(70)

Vaishampayana said, 'Hearing that the Pandavas were near, Vasudeva, the destroyer of enemies, went out with his advisers, wishing to see them. Following the proper rites, the Pandavas and the Vrishnis met. O king! Together, they then entered the city of Varanasahvya. There was a large army and the sound of hooves. The sound that arose filled up the earth and the firmament. Placing the store of riches in the front, they entered their own city. The Pandavas were delighted and were accompanied by large numbers of advisers and well-wishers. As is proper, they went and met King Dhritarashtra. They announced their own names and touched his feet. O tiger among kings! The best among the Bharata lineage met Dhritarashtra, Gandhari, Subala's daughter, and Kunti. They met Vidura, the son of a vaishya, and worshipped him. O lord of the earth! The brave ones honoured the others and were radiant. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On hearing about the extremely wonderful and colourful way your father had been born, those brave ones were struck by great amazement. Hearing about the deeds of the intelligent Vasudeva, they worshipped the one who deserves worship, Krishna, the son of Devaki.

'After a few days, Vyasa, Satyavati's immensely energetic son, arrived at the city of Nagasahvya. All the extenders of the Kuru lineage worshipped him in the proper way, accompanied by the tigers among the Vrishni and Andhaka lineages. After many kinds of tales had been recounted, Yudhishthira, Dharma's son, spoke these words to Vyasa. "O illustrious one! Through your favours, these riches have been obtained. I now wish to make arrangements for the great horse sacrifice. O supreme among sages! I wish to take your permission for this. All of us follow you and the great-souled Krishna." Vyasa replied, "O king! You have my permission to do what must be done next. Follow the ordinances and perform the horse sacrifice, giving away dakshina. O Indra among kings! A horse sacrifice cleanses all sins. There is no doubt that, having performed this sacrifice, your soul will be purified." O Kouravya! Having been addressed in this way, Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus and with dharma in his soul, made up his mind to perform the horse sacrifice. The king had obtained the permission of Krishna Dvaipayana. The eloquent one sought Vasudeva's permission and spoke these words. "O Purushottama! Through you, the queen Devaki has come to be known as an excellent mother. O mighty-armed one! O Achyuta! Please ensure what I will tell you about. O descendant of the Yadu

lineage! It is through your favours that we have obtained these objects of pleasure. It is through your valour and intelligence that we have conquered the earth. You are our supreme preceptor. Consecrate yourself to perform the sacrifice. O one who knows about dharma! O lord! If you perform the sacrifice, I will be cleansed of sin. You are the sacrifice. You are indestructible. You are everything. You are dharma. You are Prajapati." Vasudeva replied, "O mighty-armed one! O scorcher of enemies! It is appropriate that you should speak in this way. It is my considered view that you are the refuge of all creatures. Among all the brave ones in the Kuru lineage, you are resplendent because of your dharma. O king! You have surpassed them in qualities. You are the king and you are our senior.[293] You have my permission to undertake the sacrifice. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Employ us in whatever task you desire. O unblemished one! I tell you truthfully that I will do everything that you ask me to. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When you perform the sacrifice, this will also be a sacrifice for Bhimasena, Arjuna and Madravati's sons."'

## Chapter 1906(71)

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus addressed by Krishna, the intelligent Yudhishthira, Dharma's son, approached Vyasa and spoke these words. "When you truly know that it is the time for the horse sacrifice, please consecrate me. My sacrifice is dependent on you." Vyasa replied, "O Kounteya! There is no doubt that when it is time, I, Paila and Yajnavalkya will perform all the requisite rites. Your initiation will happen on the night of the full moon in the month of Chaitra.[294] O bull among the Bharata lineage! Let all the objects required for the sacrifice be prepared. Let there be brahmanas and sutas who are knowledgable about the science of horses. Let them examine the horses and choose one that will make the sacrifice successful. Follow the sacred texts and let it be released, to wander around the entire earth, up to the girdle of the ocean. O king! This will increase your fame and name." O Indra among kings! Thus addressed by the one who knew about the brahman, the Pandava king agreed and did everything just as he had been instructed. O Indra among kings! He collected all the required objects. The king who was Dharma's son brought all these objects together. The one who was immeasurable in his soul then told Krishna Dvaipayana that the arrrangements had been made.

'The greatly energetic Vyasa spoke to the king who was Dharma's son. "At the right time, we will make arrangements to intitiate you into the sacrifice. O Kourava! Let the *sphya*, *kurcha* and everything else be made out of gold.[295] Let everything used as a harness also be made out of gold. Let the horse be released today, so that it can progressively roam around the earth. O Yudhishthira! Following the sacred texts, when it roams around, let it be protected well." Yudhishthira replied, "O brahmana! I have released this horse, so that it can roam around the earth, as it wishes. I have made all the arrangements for the horse to wander around the earth, wherever it wills. O sage! But you should tell me about who should protect it." O Indra among kings! Addressed thus, Krishna Dvaipayana replied. "He is younger to Bhimasena and he is supreme among all archers. Jishnu is patient and can withstand everything. He will be the protector. The destroyer of *nivatakavachas*[296] is capable of conquering the entire earth. He possesses celestial weapons and he is capable of withstanding the gods. He has a divine bow and arrows and he will follow it. He is accomplished in dharma and artha and is

knowledgable about all the sacred texts. O best among kings! He will follow the sacred texts in making the horse wander around. The prince is mighty-armed. He is dark and has eyes that are like the petals of lotuses. The brave one is Abhimanyu's father and he will follow it. O lord of the earth! The energetic Kounteya Bhimasena is infinite in his valour. With Nakula, he is capable of protecting the kingdom. O Kouravya! The intelligent Sahadeva is immensely illustrious. Following the proper rites, he will welcome all the relatives who have been invited." The extender of the Kuru lineage properly followed everything that he had been asked to do. He gave Phalguna instructions about the horse.

'Yudhishthira said, "O Arjuna! O brave one! Protect the horse. No man other than you is capable of protecting the earth. O mighty-armed one! The kings will advance against you. O unblemished one! But if possible, you should avoid any fights with them. You should tell all of them about my sacrifice. O mighty-armed one! Depart and try to have alliances with those kings."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'The one with dharma in his soul spoke in this way to his brother, Savyasachi. He instructed Bhima and Nakula to protect the city. With the permission of King Dhritarashtra, Yudhishthira asked Sahadeva, the lord of warriors, to tend to the relatives who had been invited.'

## Chapter 1907(72)

Vaishampayana said, 'The time for initiation into the great sacrifice arrived. Following the prescribed rites, the officiating priests initiated the king into the horse sacrifice. The sacrificial animals were tied and the descendant of the Pandu lineage was initiated. With the officiating priests, the immensely energetic Dharmaraja looked resplendent. The infinitely energetic Vyasa, knowledgable about the brahman, followed the ordinances of the sacred texts and himself released the horse earmarked for the horse sacrifice. O king! The king who was Dharma's son was initiated and looked radiant. He wore a golden garland around his neck. He looked like a blazing fire. Dharma's son was clad in black antelope skin and a silken garment. He held a staff in his hand. Dazzling in his splendour, he looked like Prajapati on a sacrificial altar. O lord of the earth! All the officiating priests were attired in a similar way. Arjuna also dazzled, like a blazing fire. O lord of the earth! The horse was as dark as a black antelope and white horses were properly yoked to Dhananjaya's chariot, who waited for Dharmaraja's instructions. O king! He stretched Gandiva and his fingers were covered in armour made out of the skin of lizards. O lord of the earth! He was cheerful and ready to follow the horse. O king! O lord! All the people in the city, including the children, emerged with the desire of seeing Dhananjaya, foremost among the Kuru lineage, depart. Such a large number of them had assembled with the desire of seeing the horse and the one who would follow the horse that they crushed each other in the process and a dust arose. O great king! The sound filled the ten directions. The men assembled to see Dhananjaya, Kunti's son. "There goes Kounteya. There is the shining horse. There is the mighty-armed one, touching his supreme bow." Such were the words that were spoken and heard by the intelligent Jishnu. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O Indra among men! There were other men who spoke different words. "May you go safely and return safely. In the great

crush, we can't see him, but we can see the bow. This is the terrible twang of the famous Gandiva bow. May you go safely and return safely. May you face no fear along the journey. We will see him again when he returns. It is certain that he will return." O bull among the Bharata lineage! These were the pleasant words that were repeatedly spoken by the men and the women and he heard them.

'There was a disciple of Yajnavalkya who was accomplished in the performance of sacrificial rites. He was knowledgable about the Vedas. To perform benedictions of peace, he left with Partha. O lord of the earth! There were many brahmanas who were accomplished in the Vedas. They followed the great-souled one and so did kshatriyas and vaishyas. The Pandavas had conquered the earth with the energy of their weapons. O great king! O excellent one! The horse wandered around in different countries and many battles ensued between them and Pandava. O brave one! I will tell you about those great and wonderful accounts. O king! O scorcher of enemies! The horse circumambulated the earth. O lord of the earth! It began in the north and moved towards the east. Listen. That excellent horse brought the kings of many countries under its subjugation. It was followed slowly by the maharatha with the white horses. O great king! There were tens of thousands of kings and kshatriyas who fought and their relatives were slain. O king! Many kiratas, the wielders of swords and bows, were brought down. There were many other kinds of mlechchhas, who had been defeated in the earlier encounter.[297] There were noble kings, cheerful men and mounts. They were indomitable in battle and many of them clashed against Pandu's son. O lord of the earth! Here and there, many such encounters took place between Arjuna and kings who resided in different countries. O king! O unblemished one! I will only tell you about the great and terrible battles that Arjuna fought.'

## Chapter 1908(73)

Vaishampayana said, 'There was a battle between Kiriti and the Trigartas, who were firm in their enmity and had been slain.[298] However, their maharatha sons and grandsons clashed against him. They got to know that the supreme horse, meant for the sacrifice, had arrived on the outskirts of their kingdom. Those brave ones armoured themselves and surrounded it. The charioteers affixed their quivers. Their well-trained horses were decorated. O king! They surrounded the horse and attempted to seize it.[299] At this, Kiriti thought about what the king had desired. The scorcher of enemies first tried to pacify and restrain those brave ones. However, all of them ignored this and attacked him with their arrows. They were overcome with tamas and rajas and Kiriti tried to check them. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Jishnu seemed to laugh and said, "O ones who don't know about dharma! Refrain. It is best to remain alive." Dharmaraja had said, "O Partha! The kings whose relatives have been slain should not be killed." Because of this, the brave one tried to restrain them. Having heard the words of the intelligent Dharmaraja, he tried to follow them. However, they did not retreat. In the battle, Dhananjaya laughed. He enveloped Suryavarma, king of the Trigartas, in a net of arrows. They filled all the directions with the clatter of their chariots, the noise of the wheels and the sound of the hooves and attacked Dhananjaya. O Indra among kings! Suryavarma exhibited his dexterity in the use of weapons. He shot hundreds of arrows with drooping tufts towards Partha. There were other great archers who followed him. Desiring to slay Dhananjaya, they released showers of arrows. O king!

However, Pandava shot many shafted arrows from his own bowstring and severed those arrows, so that they fell down on the ground. The energetic Ketuvarma[300] was youthful and younger. For the sake of his brother, he fought against the great-souled Pandava. On seeing that Ketuvarma was descending on him in the battle, Bibhatsu, the slayer of enemy heroes, slew him with sharp arrows. When Ketuvarma was killed in the encounter, maharatha Dhritavarma swiftly advanced on a chariot and enveloped Jishnu with arrows. On seeing the swiftness of the young Dhritavarma, the valiant and immensely energetic Gudakesha was gratified. The son of Paka's chastiser could not discern when he affixed an arrow, aimed it and shot it. In the encounter, he honoured Dhritavarma. For a short while in the battle, he was mentally delighted with him. He was like an enraged serpent and the brave one of the Kuru lineage smiled at him. O great king! Since he did not wish to take away his life, he initially fought affectionately with him. However, protected by the infinitely energetic Partha, Dhritavarma released a sharp arrow at Vijaya. Swiftly, it severely pierced Vijaya in the hand and in pain, he released Gandiva, which fell down on the ground. O lord! O supreme among the Bharata lineage! When the bow fell down from Savyasachi's hand, it seemed to have the form of Indra's weapon.[301] O king! When that giant and divine bow fell down in that great battle, Dhritavarma laughed out loudly. Enraged, Jishnu wiped the blood from his hand. He picked up the divine bow and rained down a shower of arrows. The tumultuous noise seemed to touch heaven, as many kinds of creatures praised that deed. In his anger, Jishnu looked like Yama at the end of a yuga. On seeing this, the Trigarta warriors quickly surrounded him, desiring to save Dhritavarma. When Gudakesha Dhananjaya was surrounded, his anger increased. Using sharp arrows that were like the great Indra's vajra, he swiftly killed eighteen warriors. They began to run away. On seeing this, Dhananjaya quickly shot arrows that were like virulent snakes and laughed out aloud. All the Trigarta maharathas were distressed in their minds. Afflicted by Dhananjaya's arrows, they fled in all the directions. They spoke to the tiger among men, the slayer of samshaptakas.[302] "All of us are your servants. All of us have been subjugated by you. O Partha! Command us. We are here, awaiting your instructions. O descendant of the Kourava lineage! All of us will do what is agreeable to you." Hearing these words of subjugation from all of them, he told them, "O kings! Save your lives and accept my suzerainty."'

## Chapter 1909(74)

Vaishampayana said, 'That supreme of horses then headed towards Pragjyotisha and began to wander around there. Bhagadatta's son, harsh is battle, came out there. O foremost among the Bharata lineage! King Vajradatta found that the horse of Pandu's son had arrived within his kingdom and wished to fight. The king who was Bhagadatta's son emerged from his city. He seized the horse and left for his own city. On noticing this, the mighty-armed bull among the Kuru lineage quickly stretched Gandiva and violently attacked. The king was afflicted by arrows released from Gandiva. The brave one released the horse and attacked Partha. The supreme among kings entered the city and armoured himself again. Desiring to fight, he ascended a supreme elephant and emerged again. A white umbrella was held aloft his head. The maharatha was fanned with a white whisk. Confused by his childishness, in the battle, he challenged Kouravya Partha, the maharatha among the Pandavas, and

clashed against him. The elephant was foremost among elephants and musth exuded from its temples and mouth. It was angrily goaded towards the white horses. The elephant descended on the enemy's elephants, like a cloud showering down rain. Following the sacred texts, it had been readied for battle. It created terror and was indomitable in battle. The immensely strong king urged the elephant on with a goad. It was resplendent as it seemed to descend from the sky. O king! On seeing it descend, Dhananjaya became angry. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Though he was on the ground, he fought against the one who was on the elephant. Extremely enraged, Vajradatta swiftly released lances towards Dhananjaya. These were as powerful as the fire and descended like locusts. As they descended, Arjuna countered them with arrows released from Gandiva. These coursed through the sky and while the lances were still in the sky, severed them into two or three fragments. On seeing that the lances had been shattered, Bhagadatta's son quickly shot a line of arrows[303] at Pandava. Acting even more swiftly, Arjuna angrily shot gold-tufted arrows at Bhagadatta's son. In the great battle, the immensely energetic Vajradatta was pierced by these. Severely struck, he fell down on the ground. But he did not lose his memory. In the battle, he again climbed onto the supreme elephant. Desiring victory, he shot excellent arrows towards Vijaya. Extremely enraged, Jishnu released arrows that were like venomous serpents. These arrows flamed like the fire. Pierced by these, blood began to flow from the giant elephant, like many streams flowing down from the Himalayas, Indra among mountains.'

## Chapter 1910(75)

Vaishampayana said, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! That battle between Arjuna and the Indra among men raged for three nights, like that between Vritra and Shatakratu. On the fourth day, the immensely strong Vajradatta laughed loudly and spoke these words. "O Arjuna! O Arjuna! Wait. You will not escape from me with your life. I will slay you and following the proper rites, offer water to my father. My aged father, Bhagadatta, was your father's friend.[304] He was aged and was killed. Though I am not an adult and am still a child, fight with me now." O Kouravya! The angry King Vajradatta spoke these words and urged the elephant towards Pandava. The Indra among elephants was urged in this way by the intelligent Vajradatta and as it attacked Pandava, it seemed to descend from the sky. O great king! From its trunk, it sprayed Phalguna with water, like a blue cloud showering down on a mountain. Like a cloud, it thundered repeatedly. Goaded by the king, it trumpeted loudly and rushed towards Phalguna. Urged by Vajradatta, that Indra among elephants seemed to be dancing. O king! It quickly advanced against the maharatha of the Kouravas. On seeing that Vajradatta's elephant was descending on him, the powerful one, the slayer of enemies, did not waver. He resorted to Gandiva. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Pandava remembered the earlier enmity and the obstruction the powerful king had proved to be in accomplishing his tasks and was angry.[305] Enraged, Pandava enveloped the elephant with a net of arrows and restrained it, like the shoreline holds back the abode of *makaras*.[306] The foremost of elephants was checked by Arjuna's valour. Its limbs were pierced by arrows and it looked like a porcupine. On seeing that the elephant had been restrained, the king who was Bhagadatta's son became senseless with rage and released

sharp arrows towards Arjuna. O great king! Arjuna repulsed these arrows with a storm of arrows and it was extraordinary. The king, the lord of Pragjyotisha, became angry again. He again urged that powerful Indra among elephants, which was like a mountain. On seeing that it was descending, the powerful son of the chastiser of Paka shot an arrow that was like a fire towards the elephant. O king! This severely wounded the elephant in its inner organs and it violently fell down on the ground, like a mountain shattered by the vajra. The elephant was struck by Dhananjaya's arrows. When it fell down, it was as beautiful as the shattered summit of a large mountain that had been struck by the vajra and had fallen down on the ground. When Vajradatta's elephant fell down, Pandava spoke to the king, who had also fallen down on the ground. "Do not be frightened. This is what the immensely energetic Yudhishthira told me when I left. 'O Dhananjaya! You must never slay the kings. O tiger among men! It is only then that you will be successful in every way. O Dhananjaya! In the battle, you must not slay any of the warriors. This is what you should tell all the kings, along with their well-wishers. They should all come to Yudhishthira's horse sacrifice.' O lord of men! Having heard my brother's words, I will not kill you. Get up. Do not be afraid. O king! May you be well. O great king! Later, when it is the month of Chaitra, you should come to the intelligent Dharmaraja's horse sacrifice." The king who was Bhagadatta's son was addressed in this way. Having been vanquished by Pandava, he agreed to these words.'

## Chapter 1911(76)

Vaishampayana said, 'Thereafter, there was a battle between Kiriti and the Saindhavas. O great king! Some of them had not been killed and there were also the sons of those who had been slain. They heard that the one with the white horses had come to their kingdom. Those kings found this intolerable and advanced against the bull among the Pandavas. Though the horse was like poison, when it entered the frontiers of their kingdom, they seized it. They were not frightened of Partha, Bhimasena's younger brother. Bibhatsu was on foot and received them, stationed not far from the sacrificial horse. Those immensely valorous kings surrounded him. Remembering their earlier defeat in the battle,[307] those tigers among men were desirous of victory. They announced their names, gotras and various deeds and having done this, enveloped Partha with showers of arrows. They shot sharp arrows that were capable of repulsing Indras among elephants. Desiring victory in the encounter, they surrounded Kounteya. He was on foot and saw those brave ones, capable of performing terrible deeds in a battle. Those valiant ones fought from their chariots. They struck the brave one, the slayer of the nivatakavachas, the slayer of the samshaptakas and the slayer of Saindhava.[308] They penned in Kounteya with one thousand chariots and ten thousand horses and fought cheerfully. O Kouravya! Those brave ones remembered the death of Jayadratha, the intelligent king of Sindhu, at the hands of Savyasachi in the battle. Like clouds, all of them released showers of arrows. Enveloped by these, Partha was beautiful, like the sun covered by clouds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Covered by those arrows, the bull among the Pandavas could be seen, like a bird moving around inside a cage. O king! On seeing that Kounteya was afflicted by those arrows, sounds of lamentation arose in the three worlds and the rays of the sun were covered in dust. O great king! A

wind that made the body hair stand up began to blow. It was as if Rahu had simultaneously devoured the sun and the moon. From every direction, meteors fell into the sun and were scattered around. O king! Kailasa, the giant mountain, began to tremble. Overcome by sorrow and grief, the saptarshis and the devarshis were struck by fear and released warm sighs of fright. The moon was swiftly pierced and they[309] fell down on the lunar disc. O king! All these perverse portents were witnessed. Clouds that were as red as donkeys covered the sky. They were tinged with bows[310] and lightning and showered down flesh and blood. O foremost among the Bharata lineage! Thus it was when the brave one was enveloped by those showers of arrows and it was an extraordinary event on earth. Because of his confusion, Gandiva was dislodged from his hand and fell down on the ground. His arm guards were loosened. When the maharatha had lost his senses and was overcome by confusion, the Saindhavas swiftly released another greater net of arrows. Discerning that Partha was overcome by confusion, all the residents of heaven were terrified in their minds and thought that peace had been defeated. All the devarshis, the saptarshis and the *brahmarshis* prayed for the intelligent Partha's victory. O king! Because of this divine intervention, Partha's energy blazed forth. The intelligent one, who knew about supreme weapons, was as immobile as a mountain in the battle. The descendant of the Kourava lineage stretched his divine bow. Its great and repeated twang was like the sound from a machine. The lord showered arrows towards the enemy. Partha rained these down from his bow, like the lord of the gods showering down rain. All the Saindhava warriors and their kings were shrouded in these arrows and could no longer be seen. They were like insects headed towards a fire. They were terrified by the sound and extremely frightened, they fled in different directions. The Saindhavas lamented loudly in their grief and shed tears. The powerful one roamed around everywhere. The best among men drove them away. O king! He released that net of arrows and it seemed to be like a circle of fire. The slayer of enemies produced that net of arrows and it was almost magical. He released them in every direction, like the great Indra wielding his vajra. Those soldiers were like a mass of clouds. As he routed them, the best among the Kourava lineage was resplendent, with a complexion like that of the sun. He looked like the autumn sun.'

## Chapter 1912(77)

Vaishampayana said, 'With Gandiva, the brave one remained stationed in the battle. The invincible one was resplendent in the battle, like the immovable Himalayas. The Saindhava warriors rallied again. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Angrily, they released showers of arrows. The immensely valorous one tolerated them and still remained stationed. Kounteya spoke gentle words to those who were about to die. "Fight to the best of your capacity. Make efforts to kill me. Make every kind of effort, because you are confronted with a great fear. I will fight with you and repulse all your arrows. Stay here and make up your mind to fight. I will destroy your insolence." Angrily, Kouravya, the wielder of Gandiva, spoke these words. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! However, he then remembered the words of his elder brother. "O son![311] You should not kill the kshatriyas who seek to defeat you in battle. But you should defeat them." The great-souled Dharmaraja had said this. Therefore, Phalguna, bull among men, began to think. "This is what the Indra among men said, that

the kings should not be killed. How can I act so that Dharmaraja's auspicious words are not rendered false? I must follow the king's instructions and not kill these kings." Engaged in bringing pleasure to his brother, he thought in this way. The one who knew about dharma then spoke these words to the Saindhavas, who were indomitable in battle. "In the battle, I will not kill those among you who say, 'I am a child. I am a woman. Do not kill me. I have been defeated by you.' On hearing these words of mine, do what is best for your own selves. Those who act contrary to this will face hardships and be afflicted by fear." The bull among Kurus spoke these words and began to fight with those brave ones. He roared in rage and wished to defeat those who were also angry.

'O king! The Saindhavas released hundreds of thousands of arrows with drooping tufts towards the wielder of Gandiva. They descended, like cruel and venomous serpents. However, Dhananjaya sliced them down with sharp arrows. He severed those arrows with arrows shafted with the feathers of herons and sharpened on stone. Then, in that encounter, he pierced each of them with ten arrows. The Saindhava kings remembered Jayadratha's death and again hurled javelins and spears towards Dhananjaya. However, the great-minded Kiriti rendered their resolution futile. Pandava severed all those weapons and was delighted. On seeing that those warriors were descending on him, desiring victory, he brought down their heads with broad-headed and straight-tufted arrows. Some ran away and then returned and attacked again. When they returned, they roared, like a giant and billowing ocean. They were slain by the infinitely energetic Partha. They fought against Arjuna, according to their strength and according to their effort. Phalguna used arrows with drooping tufts to make many of them unconscious. The mounts and soldiers were exhausted.

'Duhshala,[312] Dhritarashtra's daughter, got to know that all of them were cheerless. She took her young grandson, Suratha's son, and advanced towards the brave one's chariot. Desiring peace for all the warriors, she went towards Pandava. She reached Dhananjaya and lamented piteously. On seeing her, the lord Dhananjaya cast aside his bow. Partha cast aside his bow and greeted his sister in the proper way. He spoke to her and asked her what he could do for her. She said, "O foremost among the Bharata lineage! This child is the son of your sister's son. O brave one! O bull among men! Behold. He is greeting you." When the father was thus addressed, Arjuna asked, "Where is he?"[313] O king! Duhshala replied, "There he is. He is tormented by grief on account of his father and is afflicted by sorrow. His brave father is dead. Listen to how that happened. O unblemished one! He[314] heard that his father had earlier been slain in the battle by you. He heard that you had arrived, following the horse, and were ready to fight. O Dhananjaya! He was miserable on account of his father's death and gave up his life. O unblemished one! On hearing that Bibhatsu had come and on hearing the name, he was afflicted by grief. My son fell down on the ground and died.[315] O lord! On seeing that he had fallen down, I seized his son and came here, seeking refuge with you now." Dhritarashtra's daughter released shrieks of lamentation. She was miserable and in that sorry state, with a downcast face, she spoke these words to Partha. "Look towards me, your sister. This is the son of your sister's son. O one who knows about dharma! O extender of the Kuru lineage! You should exhibit pity towards me. You should forget the king of the Kurus[316] and the evil Jayadratha. Parikshit, the slayer of enemy heroes, has been born from Abhimanyu. O mighty-armed one! In that way, my grandson has been born from Suratha. O tiger among men! I have seized him and have come before you. For the sake of pacifying all the warriors, listen to my words. O mighty-armed one! Your young and unfortunate

grandson has come before you. You should show your favours to this child. That is the way you should act. O scorcher of enemies! With me, he is bowing his head down before you. O mighty-armed one! O Dhananjaya! He is beseeching you. Seek peace. O Partha! This child's relatives have been slain and he is ignorant of that. O one who knows about dharma! Show him your favours. Do not come under the subjugation of anger. Forget his cruel grandfather and the injury he caused you. You should show your favours towards someone who has come before you." Duhshala spoke in this piteous tone. Dhananjaya remembered Queen Gandhari and King Dhritarashtra. Censuring the dharma of kshatriyas, he sorrowfully and miserably spoke these words. "Shame on the inferior Duryodhana. He was insolent and greedy for the kingdom. Because of what he did, I have conveyed all his relatives to Yama's abode." Having said this, Jaya comforted her in many ways and showed her his favours. He happily embraced her and gave her permission to return to her house. Duhshala also restrained those warriors from that great battle. The one with the beautiful face worshipped Partha and left for her own house.

'Having defeated the Saindhava warriors, the bull among men again started to follow the horse, which wandered around as it wished. O lord of the earth! In the proper way, the brave one followed the sacrificial animal, just as the god of the gods, the wielder of Pinaka, followed the stellar deer in the firmament.[317] As it wished, the horse wandered through other countries. It thrived because of Partha's deeds and roamed as it willed. O bull among the Bharata lineage! In due course, as it roamed around with Pandava, the horse arrived in the country of Manipura.'

## Chapter 1913(78)

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing that his brave father had arrived, King Babhruvahana emerged in humility, placing noble brahmanas and gifts before him.[318] Dhananjaya saw that the lord of Manipura had arrived. However, remembering the dharma of kshatriyas, the intelligent one did not approve of this. Phalguna, with dharma in his soul, was enraged and said, "This conduct of you coming out is not in accordance with the dharma of kshatriyas. I have arrived here, protecting Yudhishthira's horse. The sacrificial animal has arrived in your kingdom. O son! Why are you not fighting with me? You are knowledgable about the dharma of kshatriyas. O extremely evil-minded one! Shame on you. Wishing to fight, I have arrived before you and you are seeking peace. Though you are alive on this earth, no manliness exists in you. Since you seek to receive me peacefully, you possess the intelligence of women. O extremely evil-minded one! You have cast aside your weapons and have arrived here now. O worst of men! This is what your conduct has shown." The daughter of the serpent[319] got to know what her husband had said and could not tolerate it. Ulupi emerged through the earth and reached the spot. O lord! She saw her son there, distressed and with a downcast face, since he had been reprimanded by his lord,[320] who wished to fight with him. The serpent's daughter, beautiful in all her limbs, approached him. Ulupi was accomplished in the dharma of kshatriyas and spoke these words. "Know me to be Ulupi. I am your mother and the daughter of a serpent. O son! Act in accordance with my words. You will then be established in supreme dharma. O scorcher of enemies! Fight with Dhananjaya, foremost among Kurus. There is no doubt that he will be pleased at

this.” O bull among the Bharata lineage! King Babhruvahana was thus instigated by his mother and made up his mind to fight.

‘He donned golden armour and a radiant helmet. The intelligent one ascended a giant chariot stocked with hundreds of quivers. It had all the necessary equipment and was yoked to horses that were as fleet as thought. The chariot was decorated with a golden pole and possessed ornamented and excellent wheels. An excellent standard was raised, marked with the sign of a golden lion. King Babhruvahana set out in Partha’s direction. With the help of men who were trained and accomplished about horses, the brave one seized the sacrificial horse protected by Partha. On seeing that the horse had been seized, Dhananjaya was delighted. In the battle, his son was on the chariot, but he opposed him from the ground. The king[321] showered down thousands of torrents of sharp arrows, which were like venomous serpents, on the brave one. An unmatched encounter ensued between the father and the son. Cheerfully, they fought against each other, like the gods and the asuras. Babhruvahana, tiger among men, pierced Kiriti in the shoulder joint with an arrow with a drooping tuft and laughed. This was shafted with feathers and penetrated Kounteya, the way a snake enters a termite hill. It then entered the ground. Because of the great pain, the intelligent one supported himself on his excellent bow, resorting to his divine energy. But he seemed to be dead. O lord of the earth! When he regained his senses, Shakra’s son, bull among men, praised his son in these words. “Excellent. O mighty-armed one! O son! Excellent. O Chitrangada’s son! O son! On witnessing this deed, I am pleased with you. I will now shoot arrows at you. O son! Be steady in the battle.” Having said this, the slayer of enemies showered down iron arrows. These were shot from Gandiva and were like the vajra and thunder. However, the king severed each of those iron arrows into three fragments. His[322] divine standard was decorated with gold and looked like a golden palm tree. Using a *kshurapra* arrow, Partha brought it down from his chariot. The king’s horses were giant in size, valiant and extremely speedy. The bull among Pandavas laughed and killed them. The king became extremely angry and swiftly descended from his chariot. Enraged, he fought with his father, Pandava, on foot. The bull among the Pandus was delighted at his son’s valour. The son of the wielder of the vajra did not wish to oppress his son excessively. However, Babhruvahana thought that his father was no longer willing to fight. The powerful one again struck him with arrows that were like virulent serpents. The young Babhruvahana powerfully pierced his father’s heart with a sharp arrow that had excellent tufts. In its energy, the arrow blazed like a flaming fire. O king! It severely penetrated Pandava’s inner organs and caused great pain. The descendant of the Kuru lineage was severely struck by his son. O king! Afflicted and bereft of his senses, Dhananjaya fell down on the ground. The brave one, the bearer of the burden of the Kouravas, fell down. At this, Chitrangada’s son also quickly lost his senses. The king was exhausted in the battle and thought that his father had been killed. Earlier, he had also been severely struck by Arjuna’s arrows. On seeing that his lord had been slain, the father fell down on the ground. Scared, Chitrangada rushed to the scene of the battle. The beautiful one was tormented by grief in her heart and wept. On seeing that her husband had been slain, the mother of the lord of Manipura lamented.’

## Chapter 1914(79)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The timid one, with eyes like lotus petals, lamented in many ways. She was confused and miserable. Afflicted, she fell down on the ground. The queen was divine in form. When she regained her senses, she saw Ulupi, the daughter of the serpent, and spoke these words. “O Ulupi! Behold. Our victorious husband is lying down in the battle, slain. This is because of what you did to my young child. Are you not noble? Do you not know dharma? Are you not devoted to your husband? Because of what you have done, our husband has been killed and is lying down in the battle. Even if Dhananjaya has committed all manner of crimes towards you, I am beseeching you now to forgive him. Give him his life back. O beautiful one! You are indeed noble. You know about dharma and are famous in the three worlds. Having caused your husband to be killed by your son, why are you not grieving? O daughter of a serpent! I am not sorrowing because my son has been killed. I am grieving because of my husband and because of the hospitality that has been shown to him.” The queen said this to Ulupi, the daughter of the serpent. Having said this, the illustrious one went to where her husband was and said, “O foremost among the Kurus! Arise. O beloved! Do what brings me pleasure. O mighty-armed one! I have set this horse free. O brave one! You should indeed follow Dharmaraja’s sacrificial horse. Why are you lying down on the ground? O descendant of the Kuru lineage! My breath of life depends on you and so do those of the Kurus. How can someone who grants others their breaths of life give up his own breath of life? O Ulupi! Behold this praiseworthy sight of your husband having been slain in the battle. You incited the son to kill him and are not grieving. This child should sleep as he wishes. Instead, he has been killed and is lying down on the ground. O one with the red eyes! O Gudakesha! O Vijaya! It would be good if you came back to life. O extremely beautiful one![323] It is not a crime for a man to have many wives. Women should be like me. Their intelligence shouldn’t be like yours. This friendship[324] was ordained by the creator. It is eternal and indestructible. Know that friendship and make that relationship come true. My husband has been slain through my son now. If I do not see him alive now, I will cast aside my life. I am miserable and timid, having been separated from my husband and my son. There is no doubt that while you look on, I will fast to death.”[325] Chaitravahini[326] spoke in this way to her co-wife, the daughter of the serpent. O lord of men! Then silent, she sat down, prepared to fast to death.’

## Chapter 1915(80)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Having stopped lamenting, she seized her husband’s feet. The queen sat down, sighed and looked towards her son. However, King Babhruvahana regained his senses. He saw his mother seated on the ground in the field of battle and said, “My mother has been reared in happiness. What can be a greater misery than to see her seated on the ground, next to her brave and dead husband who is lying down? He slew many brave ones in battle and was supreme among those who wielded all weapons. He has been killed by me in the encounter. It is evident that it is very difficult to die.[327] This queen’s[328] heart is extremely firm. Otherwise, it should have been shattered. She has seen that her mighty-armed and broad-chested husband has been slain. I think it is extremely difficult for people to die until their time has come, since neither I, nor my mother, have been separated from life. Alas for the brave one’s golden armour, lying down on the ground. Behold! It has

been pierced by his son and he has been killed. O brahmanas! Behold. My brave father is lying down on the ground. He is lying down on a bed meant for heroes. He has been killed by me, his son. The foremost among the Kurus followed the horse and the brahmanas pronounced benedictions of peace on him. But he has now been slain by me in the battle. O brahmanas! Instruct me. What atonement should I practise now? I have slain my father in the field of battle and that is an extremely cruel sin. Having killed my father now and performed this extremely cruel deed, I should hide my face and roam around, observing extremely difficult austerities for twelve years. I should now wander around, with my father's skull affixed to my head. For the sake of my father, there is no other atonement that is possible now. O daughter of the best of serpents! Behold. Your husband has been slain by me. I have slain Arjuna in the battle and have now accomplished what is agreeable to you. I will now follow the path traversed by my father. O beautiful one! I am incapable of sustaining myself any longer. My mother and the wielder of Gandiva will also be dead. O queen! Be delighted. That is the truth you have realized today." Having said this, the king was afflicted by sorrow and grief. O great king! He touched water and spoke these miserable words. "O all mobile and immobile creatures! Listen. O mother! O supreme among the serpents! You also listen. I am speaking the truth. If my father, Jaya, the bull among the Bharata lineage, does not arise, in this field of battle, I will dry up my body. Having slain my father, I will never be able to escape. Having suffered from the act of having killed a senior, it is certain that I can visualize hell. If one kills a brave kshatriya, one is freed by giving away one hundred cows. However, having killed my father, it is extremely difficult for me to escape. Pandu's son, Dhananjaya, was the only one endued with great energy. He was my father and had dharma in his soul. Therefore, how can there be escape for me?" O king! The king who was Dhananjaya's son spoke in this way. The immensely intelligent one touched water and was silent, having decided to fast to death.'

## Chapter 1916(81)

Vaishampayana said, 'The king who was the lord of Manipura sat down, resolved to fast to death. O scorcher of enemies! With his mother, he was overcome with grief on account of his father. At this, Ulupi thought of the *samjivanam* jewel.[329] Devoted to serpents, it presented itself. O Kouravya! The daughter of the king of serpents grasped it and spoke these words, which delighted the minds of the soldiers. "O son! Arise. Jishnu has not been slain by you. He is incapable of being defeated by men and not even by the gods, with Vasava. For the sake of causing pleasure to your illustrious father, Indra among men, I invoked the maya known as Mohini today. O son! Kourava desired to test your strength. O king! That slayer of enemy heroes came here to fight against you in the encounter. O son! It is for his sake that I incited you to fight. O son! O lord! You should not entertain the slightest bit of doubt about your having committed a sin. This man is an immensely energetic rishi. He is eternal and indestructible. O son! Even Shakra is incapable of defeating him in a battle. O lord of the earth! This divine jewel has been summoned by me. Like amrita, it always revives the Indras among serpents when they die. O lord! Place this on your father's chest. O son! You will again see that Pandava has come back to life." He had not committed any sin. Thus addressed, he affectionately placed the jewel on his father's, the infinitely energetic Partha's, chest. When that jewel was placed, the brave lord

Jishnu was revived. Cleansed, the one with the red eyes arose, as if from sleep. The spirited and great-souled one regained his senses and arose. On seeing that his father was well, Babhruvahana worshipped him. O lord! The tiger among men arose and again regained his handsomeness. Delighted in his mind, the chastiser of Paka showered down auspicious and divine flowers from above. Without being struck by anyone, kettledrums were sounded and these made a noise like the thunder of clouds. Great sounds of praise were heard from the sky. The mighty-armed Dhananjaya was restored and arose. He embraced Babhruvahana and inhaled the fragrance of his head. His mother was not very far away, afflicted by grief, and with Ulupi. On seeing her there, Dhananjaya asked, "O slayer of enemies! Why is everyone seen to be sorrowful and miserable on the field of battle? If you know, tell me. Why has your mother come to the battleground? Why has Ulupi, daughter of Indra among the serpents, come here? I know that you fought with me because of my words. However, I wish to know the reason why the women have come here." Thus asked, the lord of Manipura bowed his head down and said, "O learned one! Let Ulupi be asked."'

## Chapter 1917(82)

'Arjuna asked, "O delighter of the Kourava lineage! Why have you come here? Why is the mother of the lord of Manipura in the field of battle? O daughter of a serpent! I hope you do desire this king's welfare. O one with restless eyes! I hope you do wish for my welfare. O one with the wide hips! O one who is beautiful to see! I hope I, or Babhruvahana, have not caused you any displeasure inadvertently. O beautiful one! Has Chaitravahini Chitrangada, your co-wife, caused you any injury?"'

Vaishampayana continued, 'At this, the daughter of the lord of the serpents laughed and replied, "You, or King Babhruvahana, has not committed any crime. His mother follows my commands, like a servant maid. Listen to how I have brought everything about. You should not display anger towards me. I bow down my head and seek your favours. O Kouravya! O unblemished one! I have done everything to bring you pleasure. O mighty-armed one! O Dhananjaya! Listen to everything. In the Mahabharata war, you slew the king who was Shantanu's son by resorting to adharma. O Partha! My act has freed you from that. O brave one! You did not bring down Bhishma while he was fighting with you. He was slain by you while he was engaged in a duel with Shikhandi. Had you given up your life without pacifying that sin, there is no doubt that because of that wicked deed, you would have descended into hell. Through your son you have now obtained pacification. O lord of the earth! O immensely intelligent one! Earlier, when the Vasus were with Ganga, I heard the Vasus talk about this, when they came to the banks of the Ganga after the king who was Shantanu's son had been slain. Having approached the great river, the gods, the Vasus, bathed there. With Bhagirathi's permission, they then uttered these terrible words. 'This Bhishma, Shantanu's son, has been slain by Savyasachi, though he was not fighting in the battle with him. O beautiful one! He was engaged with someone else. O beautiful one! Because of that reason, we are pronouncing a curse on Arjuna.' She agreed to this. My senses were greatly afflicted and I reported this to my father. On hearing this, he was also plunged in supreme grief. For your sake, on many occasions, my father went to the Vasus and repeatedly tried

to seek their favours. They eventually told him, ‘O immensely fortunate one! The lord of Manipura is young. Using his arrows, in the midst of the battle, he will bring him down to the ground. O Indra among serpents! If this is done, he will be freed from the curse.’ He returned and told me about what the Vasus had said. Having heard this from him, I have freed you from the curse. Even the king of the gods is incapable of defeating you in a battle. The son is said to be like one’s own self and you have been vanquished by your own self. O lord! No sin attaches to me. What do you think?” Thus addressed, Vijaya was delighted and said, “O queen! Everything that you have done for me is extremely agreeable.” Having said this, Jaya spoke to his son, the lord of Manipura, while Chitrangada, the daughter-in-law of the Kouravyas, heard. “Yudhishthira’s horse sacrifice will take place in the next month of Chaitra. O king! With your advisers and your mothers, go there.” This is what Partha told King Babhruvahana. With tears in his eyes, the intelligent one replied to his father. “O one who knows about dharma! Because of your command, I will certainly go there. At the great horse sacrifice, I will serve the brahmanas. O slayer of enemies! But to show me your favours, with your wives, please enter your own city.[330] You should not reflect about this. O lord! Without any pain, happily spend one night in your own residence. O supreme among victorious ones! Then follow the horse again.” Thus addressed by his son, Kounteya, the one with the ape on his banner, smiled and replied to Chitrangada’s son. “O mighty-armed one! You know about the initiation I am following now. O large-eyed one! That is the reason I cannot enter the city. This sacrificial horse goes as it wills and I have to follow it. May you be fortunate. I have to depart and there is no place where I can tarry.” The son of Paka’s chastiser was then worshipped in the proper way. Having taken leave of his wives, the supreme one among the Bharata lineage departed.’

## Chapter 1918(83)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The horse wandered around the entire earth, up to the frontiers of the ocean. O king! It then returned and headed for the city of Nagasahvya. The energetic one who sported the diadem also returned and followed the horse. Wandering around as it willed, it arrived at the city of Rajagriha. The king who was Jarasandha’s grandson[331] saw that it had arrived in his territory. The brave one was established in the dharma of kshatriyas and decided to issue a challenge for battle. Megasandhi emerged from his city on his chariot, with bow, arrows and a guard for his palms. With foot soldiers, he attacked Dhananjaya. The immensely energetic Megasandhi approached Dhananjaya. O great king! He was childish in his sentiments and spoke without any skill. “O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Why is this horse wandering around, as if in the midst of women? I will seize the horse. Make efforts to free it. When requested to fight, my forefathers may not have treated you properly. I will offer you hospitality. Strike me and I will strike you back.” Thus addressed, Pandava laughed and replied, “O king! I must counter those who seek to obstruct me. That is the vow my elder brother has imposed on me. It is certain that you know about this. Strike me to the best of your capacity. There is no anger in me.” Thus addressed, the lord of Magadha first struck Pandava. He showered down thousands of arrows, like the thousand-eyed one. O bull among the Bharata lineage! At this, the brave one who was the wielder of Gandiva shot arrows from Gandiva and baffled all the

arrows that had been carefully shot. The one with the ape on his banner baffled that torrent of arrows. He then shot blazing arrows that were like serpents with flaming mouths. He shot arrows at the standard, the flagpole, the carriage of the chariot, the horses and all the other parts of the chariot, but not at his body, or at his charioteer. His body was protected by Partha. However, Magadha did not realize this was because of Phalguna and thought that it was due to his own valour. Therefore, he continued to shoot arrows. Struck by Magadha, the brave wielder of Gandiva was as radiant as a giant and blossoming palasha tree[332] during the spring. The bull among Pandavas did not wish to kill Magadha. O Kouravya! That is the reason why he remained successfully stationed within sight of that brave one of the world. However, Savyasachi was enraged and powerfully stretched his bow. He slew his horses and severed his charioteer's head from his body. He affixed a razor-sharp arrow and brought down his great and colourful bow, the guard on his hands, his flag and his standard. The king was distressed. He was without horses and without a bow. His charioteer had been slain. He seized a club and powerfully attacked Kounteya. He then swiftly descended, with a club that was ornamented with gold. However, this was shattered into many fragments with many arrows that were shafted with vulture feathers. The club was shattered and its jeweled joints were broken into one thousand pieces. It fell down, like a she-serpent that has been released. The intelligent Arjuna, foremost in the field of battle, did not wish to attack an adversary who was without a chariot, without a bow and deprived of his club.

'He comforted the distressed one, who was following the dharma of kshatriyas. The one with the ape on his banner spoke these words of assurance. "O son! Depart. You have displayed enough of the dharma of kshatriyas. O king! Though you are a child, you have exhibited many deeds in this battle. It was Yudhishthira's instruction that kings should not be killed. O king! Though you have acted against me in the encounter, this is the reason you are still alive." Magadha thought about what he should do. He approached, joined his hands in salutation and worshipped him. Arjuna comforted him and again said, "In the next month of Chaitra, you should come to the king's horse sacrifice." Having been thus addressed, in the proper way, Sahadeva's son worshipped the horse and Phalguna, best among warriors, and signified his consent. As it willed, the maned animal[333] began to wander along the shores of the ocean, in Vanga, Pundra and Kerala. There were large numbers of many mlechccha soldiers there. O king! Dhananjaya vanquished them with the Gandiva bow.'

## Chapter 1919(84)

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! After he was worshipped by Magadha, Pandava, with the white horses, followed the horse to the southern direction. Roaming as it willed, the powerful horse returned from there and went to the beautiful city of the Chedis, known as Shuktisahvya.[334] Shishupala's son, Sharabha, honoured him. Having honoured him and shown him respect first, the immensely strong one then fought against him. O king! After having been worshipped there, the supreme among horses then went to the Kashis, the Andhrakas, the Kosalas, the Kiratas and the Tanganas. Pandava received the appropriate honours there. Kounteya then returned and went to Dasharna. There was a powerful king named Chitrangada there. A terrible battle raged between him

and Vijaya. Kiriti, bull among men, subjugated him. He then went to the kingdom of Ekalavya, the king of nishadas. Ekalavya's son received him in an encounter. A battle that made the body hair stand up raged with the nishadas. Kounteya defeated him in the battle. In the encounter, the brave one vanquished the one who sought to create an obstruction to the sacrifice. O great king! After he had been defeated by the son of the chastiser of Paka, the son of the nishada honoured him. He[335] headed towards the south, towards the salty ocean. Battles were fought between Kiriti and the Dravidas, the Andhras, the terrible Mahishakas and the hill-dwelling Kollas there. Subjugating them, the protector of the horse went to Surashtra. He went to Gokarna and then to Prabhasa. Beautiful Dvaravati was there, protected by the brave ones from the Vrishni lineage. The beautiful sacrificial horse of the king of the Kurus arrived there. O king! The young ones from the Yadava lineage sought to use force against the best of horses, but Ugrasena came forward and restrained them. The Vrishnis and the Andhakas emerged from the city. They were with Vasudeva,[336] Arjuna's maternal uncle. Affectionately, and following the proper rites, they met the best among the Kurus. They showed supreme honour to the best among the Bharata lineage. With their permission, he then left, following the horse. The horse went to the western countries, along the ocean. In due course, it wandered around and went to the prosperous land of the five rivers. O Kouravya! From there, the horse went to the kingdom of Gandhara. Followed by Kounteya, it roamed around, as it willed. Shakuni's son continued the earlier enmity and a terrible battle ensued between the king of Gandhara and the great-souled one.'

## Chapter 1920(85)

Vaishampayana said, 'Shakuni's brave son, the maharatha among the Gandharas, attacked Gudakesha and surrounded him with a large army of soldiers that was full of elephants, horses and chariots and was decorated with flags and standards. Those warriors were unable to tolerate the death of King Shakuni and with their bows and arrows, attacked Partha. The unvanquished Bibhatsu, with dharma in his soul, spoke to them, but they were not prepared to accept Yudhishthira's beneficial words. Partha first tried to restrain them with words of assurance, but they were intolerant. They surrounded the horse and Pandava became enraged. Pandava severed their blazing heads. Arjuna incessantly shot razor-sharp arrows from Gandiva. Slaughtered by Partha, they were terrified and released the horse. O great king! Afflicted severely by that shower of arrows, they retreated. The heads of the Gandharas were radiant. The energetic bull among the Pandavas aimed towards these and brought down those heads. When the Gandharas were being slain in every direction, the king who was Shakuni's son countered Pandava. Established in the dharma of kshatriyas, the king fought. Partha said, "Because of the king's instructions, I do not wish to kill these kings. O brave one! Desist from fighting. You should not be defeated by me today." However, he was confounded by ignorance and did not accept the words that had been spoken. With arrows, he enveloped the one who was like Shakra in his deeds. With an arrow that was in the shape of a half-moon, Partha fearlessly severed his helmet and conveyed it like Jayadratha's head.[337] On seeing this, all the Gandharas were astounded. They knew that he did not kill their king deliberately. The prince of Gandhara decided that it was time to run away. All of them were frightened and fled, like small animals. Partha swiftly chased them. He

severed their heads with broad-headed arrows with drooping tufts. Arrows were released from Gandiva and some of the arrows shot by Partha were thick. They were struck by these arrows and sometimes did not understand that their arms had been sliced off. That army of men, elephants and horses was terrified and routed. Slain and annihilated, it repeatedly circled around. Among those brave ones, there was no one who could stand in front of the performer of fierce deeds. The enemy was brought down and could not withstand those large arrows. At this, the terrified mother of the king of Gandhara came out. The aged minister led the way and they bore a supreme gift before them. Her son was indomitable in battle, but she anxiously restrained him. She sought the favours of Jishnu, unblemished in his deeds. Kounteya honoured her and showed her his favours. He comforted Shakuni's son and spoke these words. "O mighty-armed one! Your intelligence has not made you do what is agreeable to me. O slayer of enemies! O unblemished one! I am your brother, but you fought against me.[338] O king! Remembering the mother, Gandhari, and what Dhritarashtra has done, I have spared your life, though I have slain your followers. Let this not occur again. Let the enmity be pacified. May you not show this kind of intelligence again. In the next month of Chaitra, you should come to the king's horse sacrifice."'

## Chapter 1921(86)

Vaishampayana said, 'The horse wandered around as it willed. After saying this, Partha followed it. The horse then returned towards the city of Nagasahvya. Through messengers, Yudhishthira got to know that the horse was returning. He heard that Arjuna was well and was delighted. The king was extremely happy to hear about Vijaya's deeds in the kingdom of Gandhara, as well as in the other countries. At this time, it was the twelfth lunar day in shuklapaksha of Magha.[339] Dharmaraja Yudhishthira discerned that the nakshatras were auspicious. The immensely energetic Kourava summoned all his great-minded brothers, Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva. At that time, the supreme among the upholders of dharma spoke these words. The best among eloquent ones specifically addressed Bhima, terrible in his valour. "O Bhimasena! Your younger brother, Arjuna, is arriving with the horse. The men who followed Dhananjaya have reported this to me. The horse is returning and the time for the sacrifice has presented itself. O Vrikodara! The month of Magha is about to end and it will soon be the day of the full moon. Let learned brahmanas who are accomplished in the Vedas leave. For the success of the horse sacrifice, let them seek out a spot for the sacrifice." Thus addressed, Bhima followed the king's instructions. O king! He was delighted to hear that Savyasachi was returning. Bhimasena left with wise architects. He placed brahmanas, who were skilled in the performance of sacrificial rites, ahead of him. Following the ordinances, Kouravya measured out a sacrificial ground. He had it levelled and had houses, palaces and roads constructed. Residences were erected for the officiating priests and the wives and for the sacrificial fire towards the north. In the proper way, everything was laid out with gems and decorated with gold. There were colourful golden pillars and large gates. The sacrificial area was encrusted with pure gold. In the proper way, the one with dharma in his soul had inner quarters constructed and residences for the kings who would come from many countries. There were residences for the brahmanas who would arrive from many

countries. Bhima had many such constructed. O great king! On the king's instructions, Bhimasena, unblemished in his deeds, sent messengers to the kings. To do what was agreeable to the lord of the Kurus, those supreme kings arrived. They brought many gems, women, horses and weapons. They were made to reside in those thousands of pavilions. The sound that arose was like the roaring of the ocean and seemed to touch the sky. The king with the redeyes instructed that they should be welcomed with food and drink and beds superhuman in beauty. The mounts were fed different kinds of grain, sugar cane and milk. O tiger among men! Dharmaraja gave such instructions for those who had come. Many sages who knew about the brahman came in large numbers to the intelligent Dharmaraja's great sacrifice. O lord of the earth! All the foremost brahmanas assembled there, with their disciples, and Kourava received them. Abandoning all pride, Yudhishthira himself followed all of them, until they had found the residences earmarked for them. O king! Following the ordinances, after completing everything that was required for the sacrifice, the architects and artisans went and reported this to Dharmaraja. On hearing that everything had been arranged, Dharmaraja praised them all. With his brothers, the undecaying king was delighted.'

## Chapter 1922(87)

Vaishampayana said, 'The sacrifice started. Eloquent ones who knew about debating argued and spoke about many kinds of logic, seeking to defeat each other.[340] O descendant of the Kuru lineage! The kings saw the supreme arrangements that had been duly made for the sacrifice by Bhima, as if they had been made by the king of the gods himself. They saw the golden gates and the seats and beds made for relaxing, decorated with large numbers of jewels. There were pots, vessels, jars, jugs and pans. The kings did not see anything there that was not made out of gold. Sacred texts were recited and sacrificial altars set up. These were made of wood, but were adorned with gold. At the right time and following the rites, these radiant altars were consecrated. O lord! The kings saw that all the animals, from the land and from the water, had been brought. There were cattle, buffaloes, aged women, aquatic creatures, predatory beasts and birds. There were those born from wombs, eggs, sweat and plants and herbs. They also saw creatures from the mountainous regions. All the kings saw that the sacrificial arena was full of animals, cattle and grain and were filled with supreme wonder. Large numbers of excellent sweets were prepared for the brahmanas and the vaishyas. More than one hundred thousand brahmanas were fed. Kettledrums were repeatedly struck and made a noise like the roar of clouds. Every day, this sound signified the welcome accorded. In this way, the intelligent Dharmaraja's sacrifice was performed. O king! Piles of food, as large as mountains, were offered. There were tanks of curds and lakes of clarified butter. There are many countries in Jambudvipa. O king! Residents from all of these were seen to come to the king's great sacrifice. There were men from thousands of races. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They received the copious gifts of wealth that were made. The king's servants wore garlands and were adorned in jewels and earrings. They served the hundreds and thousands of foremost of brahmanas. These men followed them around with many kinds of food and drink. They offered food and drink that was fit for kings to the brahmanas.'

## Chapter 1923(88)

Vaishampayana said, 'The kings and lords of the earth, knowledgable about the Vedas, arrived. On seeing this, King Yudhishthira spoke to Bhimasena. "Make arrangements for honour to be shown to these tigers among men and lords of the earth. These lords of men deserve to be honoured." O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Thus addressed by the illustrious Indra among men, the greatly energetic Bhimasena, together with the twins, acted in that way. Govinda, supreme among all those who are alive, arrived before Dharma's son with the Vrishnis, placing Baladeva ahead of them. He was also with Yuyudhana, Pradyumna, Gada, Nishatha, Samba and Kritavarma. The mighty-armed Bhima showed them supreme respect too. The bulls among men entered their bejewelled residences. Conversing in Yudhishthira's presence, Madhusudana told him that Arjuna was exhausted because of the many battles. Kounteya repeatedly asked him about that scorcher of enemies and the lord of the universe told Dharmaraja about his brother, Jishnu. "O king! A messenger, a resident of Dvaraka, came to me. He had seen that the best among Pandavas had been exhausted because of numerous battles. O lord! He also said that the mighty-armed one is near. O Kounteya! Now perform the acts that must be undertaken to make the horse sacrifice successful." Thus addressed, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira replied, "O Madhava! It is through good fortune that Jishnu is returning safely. O descendant of the Yadu lineage! I wish to hear from you whatever has been said about Pandava, foremost among strong ones." O tiger among kings! Thus addressed, the lord of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas, the eloquent one, spoke these words to Yudhishthira, who had dharma in his soul. "O great king! That man reported Partha's words to me. 'At the right time, my words should be reported to Yudhishthira and Krishna.[341] All the kings are coming towards Kourava. Since we are capable, it is our task to exhibit many kinds of honour towards them. O one who shows honours![342] However, also convey to the king these words of mine. We should avoid a calamity at the time of offering the arghya.[343] The king must ensure that there is no display of intolerance. O king! Because of enmity between the kings, let the subjects not be destroyed again.' O Kounteya! These are the words that man reported to me. O king! I will tell you Dhananjaya's words. Listen. 'The king who is the lord of Manipura will come to the sacrifice. He is my extremely energetic and beloved son, Babhruvahana. Out of consideration towards me, honour him in the appropriate way. O lord! He has always been devoted towards me and faithful.' On hearing these words, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira honoured these words. He replied in the following words."'

## Chapter 1924(89)

'Yudhishthira said, "O Krishna! I have heard your agreeable words. They are indeed words that you should speak. O lord! They are like amrita and gladden my mind. Vijaya has indeed fought many battles with the lords of men, here and there and repeatedly. O Hrishikesha! I have heard that. Vijaya is extremely intelligent. However, it oppresses my mind that Partha is always separated from happiness. What is the mystery behind that? O Varshneya! I always think about Kunti's son.[344] O

Krishna! His body possesses all the auspicious marks that are revered. What is the inauspicious mark, because of which, he always suffers misery? That son of Kunti has always borne a disproportionate share of sorrow. I do not see anything on Bibhatsu's body that can be censured. If you think I deserve to hear this, you should explain it to me."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been thus addressed, Hrishikesha reflected for a very long time. Vishnu, the extender of the king[345] and the king of Bhoja, replied. "O king! No inauspicious marks can be seen in him, but for the fact that the lion among men has cheekbones that are exceedingly large. That is the reason the tiger among men is perpetually fighting. I do not see any other reason why Jaya should have his share of misery." O lord! Thus addressed by the intelligent Krishna, the foremost among the Kurus told the tiger among the Vrishnis that this was indeed true. However, Krishnaa Droupadi cast a sidelong glance towards Krishna.[346] The slayer of Keshi accepted this as a sign of affection. She was his friend. Dhananjaya was also his friend and like Hrishikesha himself.

'O lord! Bhima and the others, the Kurus and the Yadavas, were delighted on hearing about Dhananjaya's colourful exploits. They began to talk about Arjuna and conversed about the great-souled Vijaya's immortal deeds. At that time, an intelligent man arrived before the best among the Kurus. He bowed down and reported that Arjuna, tiger among men, had arrived. On hearing this, the king's eyes became full of tears of joy. On hearing this agreegable news, he gave him copious amounts of riches. On the second day, a large roar resulted and increased, when the tiger among men, the bearer of the burden of the Pandavas, arrived. A dust was raised from the hooves of the resplendent horse. It had fearlessly returned, as if it was Uchchaihshrava.[347] As he advanced, Arjuna heard many happy words spoken by the men. "It is good fortune that Partha is well. King Yudhishthira is blessed. As the best among horses wandered around, who other than Arjuna could have followed it? The great-souled one has surpassed all the kings, Sagara and the others. We have not heard of any such deed. Nor will any of the lords of the earth be able to accomplish this in the future. The foremost among the Kuru lineage has performed an extremely difficult deed." These were the words, agreeable to the ear, spoken by those men. Hearing this, Phalguna, with dharma in his soul, entered the sacrificial arena. The king and his advisers and Krishna, the descendant of the Yadu lineage, went out to receive him, placing Dhritarashtra at their head. He honoured his father's feet and the intelligent Dharmaraja. He honoured Bhima and the others and embraced Keshava. Having met them and being worshipped duly by them, he worshipped them back. The one with dharma in his soul rested, like a person who has crossed over to the shore. At this time, King Babhruvahana, accompanied by his mothers,[348] came to the intelligent Kuru. He met all the Kurus and was welcomed by all of them. He then entered his grandmother Kunti's supreme residence.'

## Chapter 1925(90)

Vaishampayana said, 'As was appropriate, he entered the residence of the Pandavas. In extremely gentle and comforting tones, he greeted his grandmother. The queen Chitrangada and Kouravaya's daughter[349] met Pritha and Krishna with humility. As is proper, they also met Subhadra and the other women of the Kuru lineage. Kunti gave both of them many kinds of jewels. So did

Droupadi, Subhadra and the other women. Desiring to do what was agreeable to Partha, Kunti herself honoured the queens[350] and they made themselves comfortable on extremely expensive beds and seats. Babhruvahana, the immensely valorous king, was honoured. Then, following the appropriate rites, he presented himself before King Dhritarashtra. Resorting to humility, the immensely energetic one approached King Yudhishthira and Bhima and the other Pandavas. They affectionately embraced him and following the rites, showed him honours. Delighted, the maharathas gave him large amounts of riches. In that way, the king[351] humbly presented himself before Krishna, the wielder of the chakra and the *gada*, like Pradyumna presenting himself before Govinda. Krishna honoured the king and gave him an extremely expensive chariot that was decorated with gold and was yoked to divine and supreme horses. Dharmaraja, Bhima, the twins and Phalguna separately honoured the one who deserved to be shown respect.

'On the third day, the sage who was Satyavati's son,[352] the eloquent one, approached Yudhishthira and spoke these words. "O Kounteya! From today, the time for conducting the sacrifice has arrived. The time for the sacrifice has arrived and the officiating priests are urging us. O Indra among kings! Let arrangements be made for the sacrifice, so that there are no blemishes. Because of the large amount of gold that has been used, this sacrifice will be famous as a golden one. O great king! Let three times the normal dakshina be offered. The brahmanas who have come for the sacrifice deserve to be given three times the norm. O king! You will then obtain three times the merits of a horse sacrifice performed with a large quantity of dakshina. O lord of men! You will be freed from the sin of having slain your kin. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! When you bathe after completing the horse sacrifice, that will be the supreme of the supreme and you will become cleaner than the most clean." The spirited and infinitely energetic Vyasa spoke in this way. The one with dharma in his soul[353] initiated himself into the horse sacrifice. The king engaged himself in the great horse sacrifice. O king! The officiating priests were knowledgable about the Vedas and performed the rites. They were virtuous and learned and knowledgable about the sacred texts. Everything was performed in the proper way. There were no deviations and nothing was done in an inappropriate way. The bulls among brahmanas did everything, both for what was laid down and what was not laid down.[354] The supreme among brahmanas, knowledgable about dharma, performed the preliminary rites. O king! Following the ordinances, the brahmanas extracted soma juice. O king! The supreme among those who drank soma extracted the soma juice. In due order, they followed the sacred texts and completed the concluding ceremony of the sacrifice. No man who came to the sacrifice remained distressed or poor. There was no one who was hungry, miserable or vulgar. On the instructions of the king, the immensely energetic Bhimasena was always engaged in providing food to those who sought food. The officiating priests skilfully performed all the rites. From one day to another day, they oversaw that all the intentions of the sacred texts were met. Among the officiating priests who were there, there was one who was not intelligent, or did not know the Vedangas. There was no brahmana who did not follow vows, or was incapable of being an instructor. There was no one who was incapable of speaking. O bull among the Bharata lineage! At the right time, sacrificial stakes were erected—six were made of bilva, six were made of *khadira*[355] and six were made out of *sarvavarnina*.[356] In the sacrifice of the lord of the Kurus, two stakes were made out of *devadaru*.[357] The officiating priests created two out of *shleshmataka*.[358] O bull among men! On Dharmaraja's instructions, Bhima had

other golden sacrificial stakes created, but these were purely ornamental. O rajarshi! O Indra among men! These were beautiful, as if the sapatarshis and the other gods had assembled around Vasava in heaven. Golden bricks were used for the *chayana*.[359] The chayana there was as beautiful as Daksha Prajapati's. It has four layers and measured eighteen cubits. It was triangular in shape, in the form of Garuda, and the sides were golden. Following the sacred texts, the learned ones then tied the animals and the birds to the respective stakes, offering each to the appropriate god.[360] After the fire rites had been performed and the sacred texts recited, all the bulls and aquatic creatures were also yoked to the stakes. In the great-souled King Kounteya's sacrifice, three hundred animals were tied to the stakes and there was also the supreme horse. The sacrifice was beautiful, as if large numbers of devarshis were directly present and the place was full of a large number of gandharvas and adorned by large numbers of apsaras. There seemed to be the songs of *kimpurushas* and ornamented with the beauty of kinnaras.[361] In every direction, there were the abodes of successful brahmanas. Supreme among brahmanas, the disciples of Vyasa, the composer of all the sacred texts, were always there. They were accomplished and skilled in all the sacrificial rites. Narada was there and the immensely radiant Tumburu. There were Vishvavasu, Chitrasena and others who were accomplished in singing. The gandharvas were accomplished in singing and skilled in dancing. When there were gaps in the sacrificial rites, they delighted the brahmanas.'

## Chapter 1926(91)

Vaishampayana said, 'The supreme among brahmanas followed the rites and sacrificed the animals. Following the sacred texts, the brahmanas then sacrificed the horse. O king! Following the rites, the bulls among the officiating priests then offered it to Drupada's daughter. O king! In the proper way, its parts were offered to the spirited one. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Following the sacred texts, they plucked out the entrails. Again following the sacred texts, they roasted the entrails and anxiously offered them. With his younger brothers, Dharmaraja inhaled the smoke. As is appropriate, this inhalation cleansed them of all sins. O lord of men! Together, the sixteen officiating priests patiently offered the remaining limbs as oblations into the fire. When the sacrifice was completed, the king became as energetic as Shakra. O illustrious one! With his disciples, Vyasa enhanced the king's energy. As is proper, Yudhishthira gave the officiating priests one thousand crores of golden coins. To Vyasa, he gave the entire earth. O king! Having accepted the earth, Vyasa, Satyavati's son, spoke to Yudhishthira, best among the Bharata lineage and with dharma in his soul. "O supreme among kings! I have vested this earth in you. Give me a price for this. Brahmanas always desire riches." With his brother and in the midst of those great-souled kings, the intelligent and great-minded Yudhishthira replied, "In a great horse sacrifice, the earth is said to be the dakshina. I have given away what Arjuna won and obtained for me. O Indras among brahmanas! I will enter the forest. Divide the earth up among yourselves. Following the indications of a *chaturhotra* sacrifice,[362] divide up the earth into four parts. O supreme among sages! I do not wish to take back what belongs to brahmanas. O unblemished ones! With my brothers, this has always been my view." When he said this, his brothers and Droupadi also signified their assent. These replies made the body hair stand up. O

descendant of the Bharata lineage! At this, there were words of praise from an invisible voice in the sky. In loud tones, the large number of brahmanas also praised this. In the midst of the brahmanas, the sage Dvaipayana agreed to these words and honoured them. However, he again said, “You gave it to me. But I am giving it back to you. Give gold to the brahmanas and let the earth be yours.” Vasudeva then spoke to Dharmaraja Yudhishthira. “You should act as the illustrious Vyasa has said.” Thus addressed, the best of the Kuru lineage and his brothers were delighted in their minds. They gave away crores and crores of coins, so that it was three times the normal dakshina at a sacrifice. In this world, no other man will be able to accomplish what that lion among Kurus did, following Marutta. The lord Krishna Dvaipayana accepted those riches. The learned one divided this into four parts and gave it to the officiating priests. Having given away the gold, Yudhishthira bought the earth back. He was cleansed of his sins and conquered heaven. With his brothers, he was delighted. The officiating priests were satisfied with this collection of gold. According to desire and according to capacity, they divided this among the brahmanas. With Yudhishthira’s permission, all the golden ornaments that were there in the sacrificial arena, the gates, the stakes, the pots, the vessels and the bricks—all these were divided among the brahmanas. After the brahmanas got what they wanted of the riches, it was the turn of the kshatriyas, the large numbers of vaishyas and shudras and the other tribes of mlechchhas. It took a long period of time to divide up the gold there. All the brahmanas were delighted and returned to their abodes. The great-souled Dharmaraja satisified them with riches.

‘The illustrious and immensely radiant Vyasa respectfully gave his own share of that great amount of gold to Kunti. At having obtained this from her father-in-law, she was delighted. Pritha used it to perform great and auspicious deeds in this world. After the sacrifice, the king and his brothers bathed and were cleansed of their sins. He was resplendent, like the great Indra among the gods. The Pandavas were surrounded by the assembled kings. O great king! They were as resplendent as planets among large numbers of stars. They gave away many kinds of jewels to the kings and elephants, horses, ornaments, women, garments and gold. Having given away that large amount of riches, in the congregation of those kings, King Partha was as beautiful and radiant as Vaishravana. He summoned the brave King Babhruvahana. He gave him a large amount of riches and granted him permission to return home. O bull among kings! He cheerfully instated the child who was Duhshala’s grandson in his own kingdom, the one over which his forefathers had ruled. In different categories, all the kings had been honoured. Having expressed their subjugation to Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, they departed. Thus, the intelligent Dharmaraja’s sacrifice was performed. There were copious quantities of riches and jewels. There were oceans of sura and maireya.[363] There were lakes where clarified butter made up the mud. There were many mountains of food. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The mire and the banks were made up of many kinds of tasty food. Many kinds of sweetmeats were prepared and eaten. No end could be seen to the number of animals that were sacrificed. There were young women who were intoxicated and maddened. They danced in delight. With the sounds of drums and conch-shells, it was enchanting. Through day and night, there were incessant exclamations of “give” and “eat”. It was like a great festival and large numbers of people were happy. Men who came from many different countries continued to talk about this. The best among the Bharata lineage showered torrents of wealth, objects of desire, gems and riches. He was cleansed of his sins. Successful, he entered the city.’

# Chapter 1927(92)

Janamejaya said, ‘If there was anything wonderful in the sacrifice of Dharma’s intelligent son, my grandfather, you should tell me about it.’ Vaishampayana replied, ‘O tiger among kings! Hear about a great wonder. O lord! This occurred after the great horse sacrifice was over. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! The best among brahmanas, relatives, kin, friends, the distressed, the blind and the helpless were gratified. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The great gifts were being spoken about in every direction. Showers of flowers rained down on Dharmaraja’s head. O unblemished one! A mongoose that was golden along one flank emerged from its hole. O lord of the earth! It spoke in a voice that resembled the vajra and thunder. Because of the roar it uttered, it terrified all the animals and birds. That proud hole dweller spoke in a human voice. “O lord of men! This sacrifice is not equal to a little bit of coarse ground meal[364] given away by a person who resided in Kurukshetra and followed the conduct of unchha.” O lord of the earth! On hearing the words of the mongoose, all the bulls among brahmanas were overcome by great wonder. The brahmanas approached the mongoose and asked, “From where have you come to this sacrifice, attended by the virtuous? What is your greatest strength? What is the learning you resort to? You are censuring this sacrifice, but what do you know? Without any deviation, all the rites have been observed in the sacrifice that has been performed. Everything has been according to the sacred texts. Everything has been proper. Everything that needs to be done has been done. Using the insight of the sacred texts and following the rites, everyone who deserves to be worshipped has been honoured here. Without any malice, oblations sanctified by mantras have been offered into the fire. With many kinds of gifts, the bulls among brahmanas have been satisfied here. The kshatriyas have been satisfied with excellent battles. The ancestors have been satisfied with funeral rites. The vaishyas have been satisfied with protection and the best of women have been satisfied through their desires having been met. The shudras have been satisfied through kind words and the others who are left have been satisfied with the remnants of gifts. The kin and relatives have been satisfied by the purity of our king’s behavior. The gods have got sacred oblations and those who sought refuge have been granted protection. Therefore, speak to these brahmanas, who are devoted to the truth. The brahmanas who desire to know have asked you about what is in the sacred texts and about what has been seen. You seem to be wise and you are radiant in your celestial form. Your words should be respectfully heard. The brahmanas have assembled here and you should tell them the truth.” Thus asked by the brahmanas, the mongoose laughed and replied, “O brahmanas! The words I have spoken are not false. Nor have I spoken out of insolence. Everything that I have said has been heard by you. The sacrifices performed by kings are not equal to a little bit of coarse ground meal being given by a person who resided in Kurukshetra, resorting to the vow of unchha. O bulls among brahmanas! I should indeed tell you about this. O bulls among brahmanas! Listen single-mindedly to what I tell you. I felt and saw something extraordinary. This is about a person who resided in Kurukshetra, resorting to the vow of unchha. That brahmana obtained heaven, with his wife, son and daughter-in-law. Because of what transpired, one half of my body turned golden.”’

# Chapter 1928(93)

‘The mongoose said, “O brahmanas! I will soon tell you about the supreme fruits of gifts. That brahmana donated only a trifle, obtained through lawful means. There are many who know about dharma who have resided in the sacred area of Kurukshetra. In earlier times, this brahmana lived there, following unchha and dwelling like a pigeon.[365] He lived with his wife, son and daughter-in-law and engaged in austerities. The daughter-in-law was thus the fourth. The aged one was devoted to dharma and was in control of his senses. The brahmana was excellent in his vows and with them, ate at the sixth hour.[366] There were some occasions when there was nothing to be had at the sixth hour. In such cases, that supreme among brahmanas would fast for the day and eat at the sixth hour of the next day. He followed the dharma of pigeons. There happened to be a terrible famine. Listen. There was nothing for the brahmana and he had not stored up anything. The collection of herbs and plants and all other objects was destroyed. When the time for eating arrived, there was no food to be had. All of them were afflicted by hunger, but managed to survive. On one occasion, it was midday and the sun was scorching down. It was shuklapaksha and the brahmana was engaged in unchha.[367] He suffered from the heat and from hunger. But nevertheless, he resorted to that austerity. With his family, he sought to obtain something through unchha. Though he was hungry, following the rituals, he touched water. That supreme among brahmanas spent the time, holding up his life with difficulty. One day, at the sixth hour, he obtained a *prastha* of barley.[368] The ascetic converted that prastha of barley into saktu. Following the rites, they performed their ablutions and offered oblations into the fire. The ascetic divided up the prastha into one *kudava* each. As they were about to eat, a guest came to the brahmana’s house. On seeing the guest, they were delighted. They cheerfully welcomed the guest and asked him questions about his welfare. They were pure in their minds, self-controlled and full of faith and restraint. They were without malice, having cast aside their anger. They were virtuous and without jealousy. O supreme among brahmanas! They were knowledgable about dharma, had renounced and had conquered their anger. They respectively informed the guest about their own brahmacharya and gotra. They asked the hungry guest to enter their cottage. ‘This arghya is for you. This is the padya. O unblemished one! This is the seat of kusha grass. O lord! This is pure saktu, obtained through fair means. O fortunate one! O supreme among brahmanas! We are giving this to you. Please accept it.’ Having been thus addressed, the brahmana accepted a kudava of saktu. O Indra among kings! But after having eaten it, his hunger was not satisfied. The one who resorted to unchha could see that the brahmana’s hunger was still not satisified. He began to think about what other food could be offered, so as to ensure satisfaction. O king! At this, his wife said, ‘Let my share also be given to him. Let the supreme among brahmanas be satisfied. He can then go wherever he wills.’ The bull among brahmanas was thus addressed by the virtuous lady. The one with dharma in his soul knew that she was hungry and did not approve of giving away her share of saktu. He was aged and learned and knew that she was afflicted by hunger. The ascetic lady was exhausted and distressed. Consisting only of skin and bones, she was trembling. He spoke to his wife. ‘O beautiful one! Even worms, insects and animals protect and sustain their wives. You should not speak in this way. A man is driven by compassion and protects and sustains a woman. A man who does not do so is dislodged from blazing prosperity and does not obtain the worlds.’ Thus addressed, she replied, ‘O brahmana! We are united

in pursuing dharma and artha. Be pleased with me and accept one fourth of the prastha of saktu. O supreme among brahmanas! For women, truth, intercourse, dharma, heaven, the acquisition of qualities and everything desired is dependent on the husband. The mother provides the season, the father provides the seed. But the supreme divinity is the husband. It is through the favours of the husband that women obtain sexual intercourse and the fruit of a son. You are my husband because you protect me.[369] You are my husband because you sustain me.[370] You have granted me a boon because you have given me a son. Therefore, accept the saktu from me. You are overcome by old age. You are aged. You are afflicted by hunger. You are extremely weak. You are exhausted because of the fasting. You are also suffering.' Thus addressed, he accepted the saktu and spoke these words. 'O brahmana! O excellent one! Please accept some more saktu.' The brahmana accepted and ate it, but was still not satisfied. The one who had resorted to the vow of unchha noticed this and began to think.

'"The son said, 'O excellent one! Take my share of saktu and give it to the brahmana. I think that this will be a good deed. Therefore, we should do it. O supreme among brahmanas! I must make every effort to sustain you. Virtuous ones desire that aged fathers must be nurtured. O brahmana rishi! The sacred texts are famous in the three worlds. For the son, it is recommended that the father must be maintained in old age. You are capable of undertaking austerities only through remaining alive. For those who have bodies, sustaining the life in the body is supreme dharma.'[371]

'"The father replied, 'Even if you are one thousand years old, it is my view that you will still be a child before me. After having a son, a father obtains success through him. O lord! I know that hunger is an extremely strong force in children. I am aged and can sustain myself. O son! But you need to be strong. O son! I am old and aged and hunger does not obstruct me. For a long time, I have tormented myself through austerities. I am not frightened of death.'

'"The son said, 'I am your offspring. I am your son because the sacred texts make me known as a *putra*.[372] It has been said that a son is like one's own self. Therefore, using your own self, save your own self.'

'"The father replied, 'You are like me in form, conduct and self-control. I have tested you on several occasions. Therefore, I will accept the saktu.'"

'The mongoose continued, "Having said this, the supreme among brahmanas happily accepted the saktu and smilingly, gave it to the brahmana. But despite eating the saktu, he was not satisfied. The supreme among brahmanas, who had resorted to the vow of unchha, was ashamed. The virtuous daughter-in-law was standing there, wishing to ensure the welfare of the brahmana. She cheerfully gathered up her saktu and addressed her senior in these words. 'O brahmana! I will obtain a son through your son. Therefore, accept this saktu from me and give it to the guest. Through your offspring, I will obtain worlds without decay and having gone there, I will not sorrow. Your grandson will be generated through him. Dharma is based on three fires and it has three components now.[373] The son, the grandson and the great-grandson are the three who ensure heaven without decay. We have heard it said in the sacred texts that it is because of the act of saving a father that a son is known as putra. Through sons and grandsons, one always obtains worlds meant for the virtuous.'

'"The father-in-law replied, 'Your limbs have become emaciated because of the wind and the heat. You can be seen to be pale. O one who is excellent in vows! Your senses are distracted because of hunger. How can I accept your saktu and cause violence to dharma? O fortunate one! Devote yourself

to fortunate conduct. You should not speak in this way. You are devoted to your vows. You show good conduct and purity. The sixth hour has come. You have resorted to hard vows. You have been fasting. How can I not notice this? You are a child. You are afflicted by hunger. You are a woman and I must always protect you. You are exhausted through fasting. You are the one who delights my relatives.'

'"The daughter-in-law said, 'You are my senior's senior. You are the god of my god. O lord! Since you are the god of my god, accept this saktu from me. The body, life and dharma are meant for providing service to a senior. O brahmana! Through your favours, I will obtain many desired worlds. O brahmana! Look towards me. I am firm in my devotion. Thinking about me in this way, you should give away the saktu.'

'"The father-in-law replied, 'O virtuous one! Because of this, you will always be radiant in your good conduct. You follow the vows of dharma and always look towards the conduct of your seniors. O daughter-in-law! Therefore, I should not deprive you and will accept this saktu. O immensely fortunate one! You will be reckoned among those who are supreme among the upholders of dharma.'"

'The mongoose continued, "Having said this, he accepted the saktu and gave it to the brahmana. The brahmana was satisfied at the conduct of that virtuous and great-souled one. Cheerfully, he spoke these words to that bull among brahmanas. That eloquent bull among brahmanas was actually Dharma in the form of a man. 'O supreme among brahmanas! I am pleased with you, at your purity, generosity in carefully giving what was obtained through lawful means, according to your capacity. This gift of yours is being praised in heaven by the residents of heaven. Behold. Flowers are being showered down from the sky and are falling down on the ground. The rishis in heaven, the gods, the gandharvas and the messengers of the gods, with the gods at the forefront, are praising you, astounded at your gift. O bull among brahmanas! The brahmana rishis, located on celestial vehicles, have come here from Brahma's world, with a desire to see you. Go to heaven. All your ancestors, who have gone to the world of the ancestors, have been saved, for many yugas that have still not come. O brahmana! Go to heaven because of your brahmacharya, sacrifices, donations, austerities and the following of dharma without deceit. You have resorted to supreme devotion and have observed austerities and excellent vows. O supreme among the best of brahmanas! That is the reason the gods are delighted with you. With a pure consciousness, you gave up everything now, in a time of hardships. Through your deeds, you have conquered heaven. Hunger destroys wisdom and drives away dharma and intelligence. Hunger overcomes knowledge and destroys fortitude. A person who defeats hunger, certainly conquers heaven. As long as one is inclined towards generosity, dharma does not suffer. You ignored the affection towards the son. You ignored the affection towards the wife. You did not pay cognizance to thirst and recognized that dharma was superior. For men, the acquisition of objects is minor. Donating it to an appropriate recipient is superior. A donation at the right time is superior and devotion is superior to that.[374] The gate to heaven is extremely subtle and because of confusion, men do not see it. The bar to heaven has greed as its seed. That bar is kept protected by attachment, which is extremely difficult to overcome. There are men who can see the truth. They have conquered their anger and have subjugated their senses. These are brahmanas who are engaged in austerities and donate to the best of their capacity. A person who is capable of giving away a thousand, but gives away a hundred; a person who is capable of giving away a hundred, but

gives away ten; and a person who has nothing, but is only capable of giving away water—it has been said in the sacred texts that the fruits obtained by all these are equal. O brahmana! When he possessed nothing, King Rantideva gave away a little bit of water with a pure mind and went to the vault of heaven. O son![375] Dharma is not pleased with the fruits from giving a large amount of donations. He is instead satisfied with a little bit that has been obtained through lawful means and is given with faith and purity. King Nriga gave away thousands of cows to brahmanas. However, because he gave away one cow that did not belong to him, he went to hell. King Shibi, Ushinara's son, gave away flesh from his own body. He was excellent in his vows. He obtained the auspicious worlds and rejoiced in heaven. Virtuous men are radiant because of the auspicious objects they have obtained themselves, according to their capacity. O brahmana! They don't obtain this through the rituals of sacrifices, but through the stores that have been lawfully earned. Anger destroys the fruits of donations. A greedy person does not go to heaven. Heaven is obtained through lawful conduct, austerities and donations. The fruits that have been obtained by you are equal to those obtained through many royal sacrifices, at which copious amounts of dakshina are given, and many horse sacrifices. O unblemished one! You have won Brahma's world through a prastha of saktu. O brahmana! As you wish, go to Brahma's abode and be resplendent there. O best among brahmanas! A celestial vehicle has appeared. As you desire, all of you ascend it.

O brahmana! Look at me. I am Dharma. You have purified your body. In this world, your fame will be eternal. Go to heaven with your wife, with your son and with your daughter-in-law.' When he was addressed by Dharma in these words, the brahmana ascended the vehicle. He went to heaven with his wife, with his son and with his daughter-in-law. That brahmana went to heaven with his son, with his daughter-in-law and with his wife as the fourth. When the one who knew about dharma had departed, I emerged from my hole. There was the smell of the saktu, which had formed some mud with the water. There were the celestial flowers, mixed with the barley that had been given. Because of all this and the austerities of the brahmana, my head turned golden. O brahmanas! Because of the trifling donation given by the one who was devoted to the truth, one half of my body turned into gold. Behold the extremely great austerities of that intelligent one. O brahmanas! Repeatedly, I cheerfully went to the sacrifices performed in hermitages, hoping that the other half of my body would also turn to gold. I heard about the sacrifice performed here by the intelligent king of the Kurus. I was extremely hopeful. But I have not been turned into gold. O supreme among brahmanas! That is the reason I spoke those words and laughed. This sacrifice is in no way comparable to the one that involved the giving away of one prastha of saktu. With the grains in that prastha of saktu, I was turned into gold. This great sacrifice is not equal to that. This is my view."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! At that sacrifice, having said this to the supreme of brahmanas, the mongoose disappeared and the brahmanas returned to their houses. O conqueror of enemy cities! In this way, I have told you everything that happened, including the wonderful event at the great horse sacrifice. O king! You should never be astounded at any sacrifice. Through austerities alone, thousands of rishis have gone to heaven. It has been held that lack of injury towards all beings, contentment, good conduct, uprightness, austerities, self-control, truthfulness and donations are also equal.'[376]

# Chapter 1929(94)

Janamejaya said, 'Kings are addicted to sacrifices and maharshis are addicted to austerities. O lord! Brahmanas base themselves on tranquility, peacefulness and self-control. Therefore, there is nothing in this world that is equal to the fruits of sacrifices. This is my intelligence and there is no doubt about this. O supreme among brahmanas! Many kings have performed sacrifices. They have obtained fame in this world and, after death, have gone to heaven. The king of the gods, the one with one thousand eyes, performed sacrifices and gave away a lot of dakshina. The immensely energetic lord obtained the entire kingdom of heaven. In that way, King Yudhishthira, with Bhima and Arjuna at the forefront, used their valour to obtain a prosperity that was equal to that of the king of the gods. Therefore, why did the mongoose censure the sacrifice, the great horse sacrifice that the great-souled king performed?'

Vaishampayana replied, 'O bull among men! I will tell you about the fruits of sacrifices, but I will first tell you about the rites. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I will tell you. Listen. All the maharshis have said that, on an earlier occasion, Shakra performed a sacrifice. The officiating priests anxiously performed all the acts associated with the rituals of a sacrifice. The *hotri*, possessing all the qualities, poured oblations into the fire. The supreme rishis were there and the gods were summoned. O king! The brahmanas were extremely learned and recited agreeable chants. The bulls among the *udhvaryus* were not exhausted and chanted softly. O great king! It then became the time to sacrifice the animals and the maharshis were overcome with compassion. The rishis, rich in austerities, were distressed on seeing the animals. They approached Shakra and said, "This kind of ritual in a sacrifice is not auspicious. You desire great dharma, but this displays ignorance. O Purandara! It is not seen that the rituals of a sacrifice involve the slaughter of a large number of animals. O lord! What you have set out to do involves a destruction of dharma. This is not dharma. This is not an act of dharma. Violence is not said to be dharma. If you so desire, let the sacrifice be performed in accordance with the sacred texts. If one follows the ordinances indicated for a sacrifice, great dharma will be ensured. O one with the one thousand eyes! Perform the sacrifice with seeds that have been stored for three years. O Shakra! This will be great dharma. Think about this and understand." The rishis knew about the truth and spoke these words. However, overcome by pride and delusion, Shatakratu did not accept them. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! A great dispute arose between Shakra and the maharshis, about whether sacrifices should be performed with animate or inanimate objects.

'The rishis knew about the truth and were distressed at this dispute. They had an agreement with Shakra that they would go and ask King Vasu. "O fortunate one! O king! What have the sacred texts said about sacrifices? Should a sacrifice be performed with slaughter of animals or with herbs and juices?" On hearing these words, he reflected about the strengths and weaknesses of both sides. The king replied, "A sacrifice can be performed with whatever is available." Having said this, the king entered the nether regions. O king! The lord who was the king of the Chedis suffered this hardship because of having uttered a falsehood. A learned person who desires dharma should not perform a sacrifice with an object that has been obtained unlawfully. The fruits of dharma are not reaped from this. Donations may be made to brahmanas by a man who is evil-souled. This is deceitful dharma and leads to people distrusting him. A brahmana may resort to wicked deeds and obtain riches. He may be

overcome by uncontrolled attachment and confusion. However, eventually, he attains a vile end. A wicked person may be devoid of intelligence and may give away a lot of donations. But he doesn't realize the essence and is destroyed. There may be an evil-souled person who is attached to adharma and is violent. That evil-minded person does not obtain any fame through his gifts, in this world or in the next. Having become overcome by greed and delusion, one's intelligence may turn to accumulation. Because of evil intelligence, such a person may oppress beings and indulge in violence. Riches obtained through greed may be given away in sacrifices. However, it is extremely difficult for those deeds to lead to any success. There are those who are rich in austerities. They give away what has been obtained through unchha—roots, fruits, herbs, water and leaves. These men follow dharma. Having given away these gifts, they go to heaven. There is great dharma in renunciation, donations, compassion towards beings, brahmacharya, truthfulness, lack of anger, fortitude and forgiveness. This is eternal dharma and this is the eternal foundation. We have heard of brahmanas and kings like Vishvamitra in earlier times. Vishvamitra, Asita, King Janaka, Kakshasena, Arshtishena, King Sindhudvipa—these and many others obtained supreme success. The kings and those rich in austerities resorted to truth and gave away what was lawfully obtained. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras who resort to austerities and purify themselves in the fire of dharma and donations, go to heaven.'

## Chapter 1930(95)

Janamejaya said, 'O illustrious one! If everything can be obtained through following dharma and renunciation, you should tell me everything about it. You are accomplished in speaking. Great fruits were obtained by the one who lived by the vow of unchha, by giving away saktu. O brahmana! You have spoken to me about it. But I suffer from a great doubt. What is definitely supreme among all kinds of sacrifices? O bull among brahmanas! You should tell me everything about this.'

Vaishampayana replied, 'O scorcher of enemies! In this connection, an ancient history is recounted about what happened in earlier times, in Agastya's great sacrifice. O great king! In earlier times, there was the greatly energetic Agastya. He was engaged in the welfare of all beings. He initiated himself into a sacrifice that would last for twelve years. Many hotris came to the great-souled one's sacrifice and they were like the fire. They ate roots. Some did not eat. Others were *ashmakuttas*.[377] Still others subsisted on rays. There were *parighrishtikas*, *vaighasikas* and *samprakshalas*. There were many mendicants and those who lived on alms who were present. All of them had conquered their anger and vanquished their senses. They had directly experienced dharma. All of them based themselves on self-control. They were devoid of insolence and confusion. They were always based on pure conduct and were never constrained by their senses. Those maharshis were worshipped at that sacrifice and ate. To the best of his capacity, the illustrious one[378] offered food that had been properly earned. Nothing at that sacrifice was not of this nature. In this way, there were many other great sages who performed similar sacrifices.

'O supreme among the Bharata lineage! While Agastya's great sacrifice was going on, the thousand-eyed one did not shower down. O king! During gaps in the great-souled Agastya's sacrifice,

the sages, cleansed in their souls, conversed about this. “This Agastya is conducting a sacrifice. However, when he is offering the food, it suffers from malice. If Parjanya does not rain down, how will there be food? O brahmanas! The sage’s great sacrifice will go on for twelve years. The god will also not shower down for twelve years. O intelligent maharshis! Think about this. You should show some compassion for Agastya, whose austerities are great.” Agastya was powerful and eloquent. On hearing these words, he bowed his head down and gratified those sages. He replied in these words. “If Vasava does not shower down for twelve years, I will follow the eternal rituals and perform a mental sacrifice. If Vasava does not shower down for twelve years, I will make great efforts and perform other sacrifices with great vows. I have collected the seeds for this sacrifice over many years. I will accomplish tasks with these seeds and there will be no obstruction to that. Under no circumstance, is anyone capable of rendering my sacrifice unsuccessful. This is regardless of whether the god rains, or the god does not rain. Indeed, if Indra does not act in accordance with what I wish, I will myself become Indra and revive the subjects. Every creature will obtain the food that he is used to. I will specially do this, again and again. Let gold arrive here today and all the riches that are extremely difficult to obtain. Let everything in the three worlds arrive here, of its own accord. Let large numbers of divine apsaras come and gandharvas and kinnaras. Let Vishvavasu and all the others who are always worshipped come here. Let all the riches that exist in Uttara Kuru arrive at this sacrifice on their own. Let heaven and all those who reside in heaven come. Let Dharma himself come.” Thus addressed by the intelligent one, everything arrived.

‘The sages witnessed the strength of the sage’s austerities. They were astounded and spoke words that were full of great meaning. “We are pleased at your words, but we do not wish that your austerities should be diminished.[379] We have initiated ourselves in a sacrifice where we are only looking for oblations. We desire a sacrifice that we can undertake ourselves. There is nothing else that we are looking for. We are engaged in our own tasks and subsist on what is obtained through lawful means. We pray in the proper way, follow the Vedas and observe brahmacharya. After having spent a period of following the law, we have emerged from our houses. We wish to follow the rituals instructed by dharma. We wish to torment ourselves through those kinds of austerities. You should properly instruct that one’s intelligence must always turn away from violence. O lord! You must always speak about sacrifices that involve no violence. O supreme among the best of brahmanas! We will be pleased at this. After the sacrifice is over, we will take our leave from you and depart.” While they were conversing, the extremely energetic Purandara, the king of the gods, showered down, having witnessed the strength of his austerities. O Janamejaya! Until the sacrifice of that infinitely valorous one was over, Indra of the gods showered down the rain that was desired. O rajarshi! Placing Brihaspati before him, the lord of the gods himself arrived there and gratified Agastya. When the sacrifice was over, Agastya was extremely delighted. Following the prescribed rites, he worshipped the great sages and gave them permission to leave.’

## Chapter 1931(96)

Janamejaya asked, ‘Who was the mongoose with a golden head? Who was the one who spoke in a human voice? I am asking you. Tell me.’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘You did not ask me earlier. That is the reason I did not tell you. Hear about the mongoose, the one who spoke in a human voice. In ancient times, Jamadagni thought of a funeral ceremony. The cow for the oblations appeared before him and he milked her himself. He placed the milk in a new, firm and pure vessel. Krodha[380] adopted a personified form and entered the vessel. He wished to test what the best among sages would do if something disagreeable was done. Having thought this and driven by this wicked intelligence, he corrupted the milk. But the sage knew that this was Krodha and wasn’t enraged. At this, Krodha showed his form to him and stood, hands joined in salutation. “O foremost among the Bhrigu lineage! It is said that the Bhrigus are extremely prone to rage. But I have been conquered by you. People are wrong in their slander. I have been defeated by you. O great-souled one! I am stationed before you now. Forgive me. O virtuous one! I am frightened of your austerities. O lord! Show me your favours.” Jamadagni replied, “O Krodha! I have seen you in your personified form. Without any anxiety, depart. You have not caused me any injury today and there is no rage in me. I kept this milk with the resolution that I would offer it to the immensely fortunate ancestors. Go to them and ascertain what they want.” Thus addressed, fear was generated in him and he[381] disappeared. Cursed by the ancestors, he became a mongoose. He sought their favours, so that the curse might end. They told him, “When you speak ill of dharma, you will be freed.” Thus addressed, he wandered in places where sacrifices were performed and in forests, censuring dharma. It was thus that he came to this sacrifice. He censured Dharma’s son by mentioning the prastha of saktu. Yudhishthira was Dharma’s self and thus Krodha was freed from the curse. This is what transpired at the great-souled one’s sacrifice. While we looked on, the mongoose vanished.’

*This concludes Ashvamedhika Parva.*

# Ashrama-Vasika Parva

In the 18-parva classification, Ashrama-Vasika Parva is the 15th. In the 100-parva classification, Ashrama-Vasika Parva consists of Sections 90 to 92. Ashrama means a forest and Ashrama-Vasika Parva is about residing in a hermitage in the forest. This parva has 47 chapters. In the numbering of the chapters in Ashrama-Vasika Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Ashrama-Vasika Parva.



Section Ninety

# *Ashrama-Vasa Parva*

*This section has 737 shlokas and 35 chapters.*


*Chapter 1932(1): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1933(2): 13 shlokas*
*Chapter 1934(3): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1935(4): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1936(5): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1937(6): 28 shlokas*
*Chapter 1938(7): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1939(8): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1940(9): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1941(10): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1942(11): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1943(12): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1944(13): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1945(14): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1946(15): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1947(16): 27 shlokas*
*Chapter 1948(17): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1949(18): 12 shlokas*
*Chapter 1950(19): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1951(20): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1952(21): 13 shlokas*
*Chapter 1953(22): 32 shlokas*
*Chapter 1954(23): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1955(24): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1956(25): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1957(26): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1958(27): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1959(28): 16 shlokas*
*Chapter 1960(29): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1961(30): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1962(31): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1963(32): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1964(33): 37 shlokas*
*Chapter 1965(34): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1966(35): 25 shlokas*

*Ashrama-Vasa Parva means more or less the same as Ashrama-Vasika Parva. A bit more accurately, Ashrama-Vasika means residents of the forest, while Ashrama-Vasa means residence in the forest. Dhritarashtra, Gandhari, Sanjaya, Vidura and Kunti leave for the forest. Vidura dies and merges into Yudhishthira.*

# Chapter 1932(1)

Janamejaya asked, ‘After having obtained the kingdom, how did the immensely fortunate Pandavas, my grandfathers, act towards the great-souled and great king, Dhritarashtra? The king’s advisers and sons had been slain. He was without a refuge. With the prosperity gone, what did the illustrious Gandhari do? How long did my great-souled forefathers and ancestors remain in that kingdom? You should tell me this in detail.’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘With the enemy slain, the great-souled Pandavas obtained the kingdom. Placing Dhritarashtra at their head, they protected the earth. Vidura, Sanjaya and the intelligent Kourava Yuyutsu, the son of a vaishya lady, tended to Dhritarashtra. Before undertaking any task, the Pandavas asked the king and obtained his permission. They did this for fifteen years. Those brave ones always went to the king and worshipped him. Acting according to the views of Dharmaraja, they touched his feet. Before they engaged in any task, he inhaled the fragrances of their heads. Kuntibhoja’s daughter[1] also followed Gandhari. So did Droupadi, Subhadra and the other Pandava women. They followed the rites in attending to them, as if they were their own father-in-law and mother-in-law. O great king! Yudhishthira presented Dhritarashtra with extremely expensive beds, garments, ornaments, everything that should be given to a king and large quantities of food and objects of pleasure. Kunti acted in the same way towards Gandhari, treating her like a senior. Vidura, Sanjaya and Kourava Yuyutsu tended to the aged king, whose sons had been slain. Drona’s brother-in-law, Kripa, the great archer and beloved and great brahmana, also attended on him. The illustrious Vyasa always dwelt with the king. O king! He told him accounts of the ancient rishis, devarshis and rakshasas. On Dhritarashtra’s instructions, Vidura undertook many kinds of tasks and rites that were in conformity with dharma. Because of Vidura’s influence, they obtained riches, large and small, from vassal kingdoms and were loved by them. Those who were imprisoned were freed. Those identified for capital punishment were also freed. With dharma in his soul, the king never said anything about this.[2] When Ambika’s son[3] went out on a pleasure trip, the immensely energetic king of the Kurus, Yudhishthira, gave him every object of pleasure. As in earlier times, cooks, chefs[4] and confectioners served King Yudhishthira. As is proper, the Pandavas offered Dhritarashtra extremely expensive garments and many kinds of garlands. As was the case earlier, he was given maireya liquor, meat, light beverages and wonderfully concocted food. Lords of the earth assembled on every side. As in earlier times, all of them served the Indra among the Kouravas.[5] Kunti, Droupadi, the beautiful Satvati,[6] Ulupi, the naga princess, the queen Chitrangada, Dhrishtaketu’s sister and Jarasandha’s daughter[7]—all of them served Subala’s daughter[8] like servants. Yudhishthira’s perpetual instruction to his brothers was that the king should not suffer the slightest bit of misery because of being deprived of his sons. All of them paid special attention to Dharmaraja’s purposeful words and acted according to them, with the sole exception of Bhima. The evil intelligence and conduct of the sons of Dhritarashtra at the time of the gambling match were still lodged in the brave one’s heart.’

## Chapter 1933(2)

Vaisampayana said, ‘The king who was Ambika’s son was thus worshipped by the Pandavas. He found pleasure, as in earlier times, and the rishis tended to him. The king who was Kunti’s son, the extender of the Kuru lineage, gave everything that should be given to brahmanas. King Yudhishthira was affectionate and non-violent. The lord of the earth told his brothers and advisers, “The lord of men[9] must be worshipped by me and you. A person who follows Dhritarashtra’s instructions is my well-wisher. A man who acts contrary to this is an enemy and will go to hell.” At the time of performing the funeral ceremonies for his sons, it was instructed that everything that the king[10] desired should be given. The immensely intelligent Kouravya, King Dhritarashtra, gave brahmanas great quantities of riches, just as they deserved. Dharmaraja, Bhima, Savyasachi and the twins—all of them followed Dhritarashtra’s instructions. How could the aged king suffer grief on account of his sons? They wished to ensure that he did not die because of grief. They made sure that the foremost among the Kurus obtained all the objects of pleasure that he enjoyed as long as his sons were alive. Together, all the five Pandava brothers followed this good conduct and obeyed Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra saw that those brave ones were humble and always behaved with modesty. He was like a preceptor surrounded by disciples. Gandhari performed all kinds of funeral ceremonies for her sons and freed herself of her debt towards them, giving to brahmanas. In this way, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira, intelligent and foremost among those who upheld dharma, together with his brothers, worshipped the king.’

## Chapter 1934(3)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The extremely energetic and aged king, the extender of the Kuru lineage, could not see anything unpleasant in Pandu’s descendant. The great-souled Pandava always followed virtuous conduct and King Dhritarashtra, Ambika’s son, was pleased with him. Gandhari, Subala’s daughter, forgot all sorrow on account of her sons. She was always pleased with them, as if they were her own sons. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Kouravya always acted in an agreeable way towards the king who was Vichitravirya’s son and never did anything disagreeable. O great king! Whatever King Dhritarashtra said that he wanted done and whatever the illustrious Gandhari desired, small or large, was done by the Pandava king, the bearer of burdens. The destroyer of enemy heroes honoured those words and acted in accordance with those wishes. Therefore, the king was pleased at this conduct and was tormented by memories of his evil-minded son. The king always arose at dawn, meditated and purified himself. He then blessed the sons of Pandu that they might be invincible in battle. As instructed by brahmanas, he offered oblations into the fire. The king pronounced benedictions that the sons of Pandu might live for a long time. The king had never obtained such great delight from his own sons, nothing like the joy the king got from the sons of Pandu. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The state of brahmanas, the aged, kshatriyas and large numbers of vaishyas and shudras was extremely agreeable. Following the king,[11] the king acted so that his heart no longer

bore the evil acts that the sons of Dhritarashtra had done towards him earlier. If a man did anything unpleasant towards Ambika's son, the intelligent Kounteya acted against him. Scared of Yudhishthira, no man said anything about the wicked deeds done by King Dhritarashtra or Duryodhana. O slayer of enemies! The Indra among men,[12] Gandhari and Vidura were pleased with Ajatashatru's fortitude and purity, but not with Bhima. Bhima did follow the instructions of the king, Dharma's son. However, he became cheerless whenever he saw Dhritarashtra. Kouravya[13] saw that Dharma's son followed the extremely intelligent king and also followed him, but his heart was not in it.'

## Chapter 1935(4)

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! The people did not see anything missing in the affection that King Yudhishthira and Duryodhana's father displayed towards each other. O king! However, whenever the Kourava king remembered his foolish son, the king couldn't help mentally censuring Bhima. O Indra among kings! In that way, Bhimasena could never tolerate King Dhritarashtra and caused the aged one displeasure. Vrikodara didn't reveal these disagreeable acts. Instead, he used deceitful men to ignore his commands. One day, in the midst of his well-wishers, Bhima intolerantly slapped his palms, in Dhritarashtra and Gandhari's hearing. He remembered his enemy, Duryodhana, and Karna and Duhshasana. Extremely enraged, Bhima spoke these harsh words. "This aged king's sons were skilled in the use of all weapons. However, my arms are like clubs and I used these to kill them and convey them to the world hereafter. My arms are said to be like clubs and are impossible to withstand. The sons of Dhritarashtra were embraced by these and were destroyed. That is the reason these arms should be smeared with sandalwood paste and revered. It is because of these that Duryodhana and his sons and relatives have been destroyed." Vrikodara spoke many other similar words and they were like stakes. Hearing these, the king was distressed. The intelligent queen, Gandhari, knew about the progress of time and knew about all kinds of dharma. Despite hearing this, she paid no attention. However, after fifteen years had elapsed, the king was extremely affected by similar words from Bhima and they were like arrows. The king became distressed. King Yudhishthira, Kunti's son, didn't know this, nor did the one with the white horses,[14] Kunti, the illustrious Droupadi or Madri's sons. They did not know Bhima's mind, or that he was happy at this. They sought to protect the king and never spoke anything that was disagreeable. After this, Dhritarashtra summoned his well-wishers and in a voice choking with tears, spoke these purposeful and grave words.'

## Chapter 1936(5)

'Dhritarashtra said, "All of you know how the destruction of the Kurus came about. O Kouravas! It is known that all this happened because of my crimes. He was evil-minded, foolish and increased the fear of his relatives. However, it was I who instated Duryodhana as a lord over the Kouravas. I did not listen to Vasudeva's words, which were full of importance. 'It will be a virtuous

act to kill this wicked and evil-minded one, with his advisers.' I was overcome by affection towards my son and did not heed the learned and beneficial words of Vidura, Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. At every step, the illustrious and great-souled Vyasa said the same thing and so did Sanjaya and Gandhari. I am now tormented because of that. The great-souled sons of Pandu are full of qualities. But I did not bestow the blazing and prosperous earth, inherited from my ancestors, on them. Gada's elder brother[15] foresaw the destruction of all the kings, but Janardana thought that this would be supremely beneficial. I did not control myself from engaging in what was futile. I always bear that in my heart, like thousands of snakes. In particular, it has tormented me for fifteen years. I am extremely evil-minded. I wish to control myself and purify my sins. Gandhari knows that I only eat and drink a little, at the fourth hour, and sometimes at the eighth hour. All my relatives think that I eat regularly. This has been hidden. Otherwise, Pandava Yudhishthira would have been sorely tormented. I clad myself in deerskin, lie down on darbha grass on the ground and meditate. The illustrious Gandhari also follows similar vows. One hundred brave sons, who did not retreat from the field of battle, have been killed. Knowing that this is the dharma of kshatriyas, I have not been tormented."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Kourava spoke in this way to Dharmaraja. "O fortunate one! O Yadavi![16] Listen to my words. O son! I have been sustained by you in great happiness. I have given great gifts away and have repeatedly performed funeral ceremonies. O son! My age and strength are just right to earn auspicious merits. Though her sons have been slain, it is Gandhari who has taught me patience. They oppressed Droupadi and stole away her riches. However, following dharma, those violent ones have been slain in the battle. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! I do not see anything more that needs to be done for them. They have been killed while facing the battle and have conquered the worlds with their weapons. O Indra among kings! My best course of action is what brings benefit to me and Gandhari. Therefore, you should grant us permission. You are foremost among those who uphold dharma. You have always been devoted to dharma. You are the king who sustains the life of all beings. That is the reason I am speaking to you. O brave one! Grant us permission. We wish to resort to the forest. With Gandhari, I will wear tattered rags and skins. Pronouncing benedictions over you, we should resort to dwelling in the forest. O bull among the Bharata lineage! O son! In our lineage, that has always been regarded as the best. O king! When the age is right, one must hand over the possessions to the son and go to the forest. I will reside there, subsisting on air and fasting. O brave one! With my wife as a companion, I will observe supreme austerities. O son! As a king, you will also obtain the fruits of those austerities. The king has a share in the fruits, good or bad, of anything done in the kingdom."'

## Chapter 1937(6)

'Yudhishthira said, "O king! I am not pleased at your leaving the kingdom in such grief. Shame on me. I am extremely evil-minded. I have been addicted to the kingdom and have been careless. O king! I did not know that you were afflicted by grief and have become thin because of fasting. With my brothers, I did not know that you were not eating and were lying down on the ground. I am foolish and have been deceived by your deep intelligence. Before this, though you were afflicted by sorrow,

you assured me. What will I do with this kingdom or with these objects of pleasure? What will I do with sacrifices and happiness? My king has suffered from a great deal of misery. I now know that my kingdom is diseased and so am I. O lord of men! But what is the point in speaking these words of sorrow to you? You are our father. You are our mother. You are our supreme preceptor. Separated from you, how will we remain alive? O supreme among kings! Yuyutsu is a son who has been born from your own loins. O great king! Let him be the king, or whoever else you think fit. I will go to the forest. You rule the kingdom. I am being burnt through ill fame. Do not burn me again. I am not the king. You are the king. I am dependent on you. You know about dharma. How can I grant permission to someone who is a senior? O unblemished one! Because of what Duryodhana did, I bear no rancour in my heart. Know it to be destiny and we were all confounded by it. We are your sons, just like Duryodhana and the others. It is my view that there is no difference between Gandhari and Kunti. O Indra among kings! If you abandon us and leave, I will follow you at the rear. I will take a pledge on that. This earth, up to the girdle of the ocean, is full of riches. Without you, this will no longer be agreeable to me. All of this belongs to you. To gratify you, I bow down my head. O Indra among kings! All of us are under your subjugation. Please dispel this mental fever. O lord of men! I think it is destiny which has come over you. It is through good fortune that we are able to serve you. Free us from this mental fever."

'Dhritarashtra replied, "O son! O descendant of the Kuru lineage! My mind has turned towards austerities. O lord! Going to the forest is appropriate for our lineage. O son! You have honoured me for a long time. You have served me for a long time. O lord of men! Since I am aged, you should grant me permission."'

Vaishampayana said, 'King Dhritarashtra, Ambika's son, spoke these words to Dharmaraja and joining his hands in salutation, trembled. He told Sanjaya, the great adviser, and maharatha Kripa, "I wish to entreat the king through you. My mind and heart are distressed. My mouth is dry. I am aged and speech leads to exertion." The aged king, the extender of the Kuru lineage and with dharma in his soul, spoke in this way. The intelligent one leaned on Gandhari and seemed to be lifeless. The king of the Kurus was seated there, immobile. On seeing him, King Kounteya, the slayer of enemy heroes, was suddenly filled with great depression.

'Yudhishthira said, "His strength was equal to that of ten thousand elephants. That king is lying down now, leaning on a woman and seems to be lifeless. In earlier times, he used his strength to crush Bhimasena's iron image into fragments.[17] For the sake of strength, he now has to hold on to a woman. Shame on me. I do not know about dharma. Shame on my intelligence. Shame on my learning. The lord of the earth is now lying down in a way that does not befit him. I will also fast, like my preceptor, if the king and the illustrious Gandhari do not eat."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Pandava rubbed the king's hands with cold water. Knowledgable about dharma, he also gently rubbed his chest and face. The water was auspicious and fragrant, mixed with jewels. At the touch of the king's hand, the king regained his senses.'

## Chapter 1938 (7)

‘Dhritarashtra said, “O Pandava! Touch me with your hands again and embrace me. O lotus-eyed one! I have regained my senses through your touch. O lord of men! I wish to inhale the fragrance of your head. If you touch me with your hands, I will not give up my life. It is the eighth hour and time for me to eat. O tiger among Kurus! Having not eaten, I am incapable of moving. I have committed a great deal of exertion in seeking your permission. O son! That is the reason I was weak and seemed to have lost my senses. O lord! The touch of your hand has been like the touch of amrita. O extender of the Kuru lineage! I think that I have got back my life again.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Thus addressed by his father’s elder brother, Kounteya gently and affectionately touched him all over the body. At this, King Dhritarashtra regained his senses. He embraced Pandava with his arms and inhaled the fragrance of his head. In great sorrow, Vidura and all the others wept loudly. However, since they were overcome with sorrow, the Pandavas had nothing to say to the king or to Gandhari, who was knowledgable about dharma and bore the severe mental pain. Kunti and the other women were also extremely distressed. In their great grief, they tried to restrain the king. Tears of sorrow flowed down their faces. They surrounded him and stood there. Yet again, Dhritarashtra spoke these words to Yudhishthira. “O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! I seek your permission to become an ascetic. O son! My mind is full of distress and I have been thinking about this repeatedly. O son! You should not cause me greater grief.” This is what the Indra among the Kouravas told the Pandava. At this, a great sound of lamentation arose among all the warriors. Dharma’s son saw that the king was wan and faded, exhausted with the fasting, as if he was made out of only skin and bones. The mighty-armed one embraced his father. He shed tears of sorrow and again spoke these words. “O best among men! I do not desire to remain alive, nor do I wish for the earth. O king! O scorcher of enemies! If I have done what you wish and if you are fond of me, if you love me and wish to gratify me, then stay with us and eat something.” The immensely energetic king told Dharma’s son, “O son! If you wish that I should eat something, with your permission, I shall.” Dhritarashtra, Indra among kings, told Yudhishthira this. Satyavati’s son, the rishi Vyasa, arrived and spoke these words.’

## Chapter 1939(8)

‘Vyasa said, “O Yudhishthira! O mighty-armed one! Do what the great-souled Dhritarashtra, descendant of the Kuru lineage, has asked. Do not think about this. This king is aged. More specifically, his sons have been killed. It is my view that he will not be able to bear this hardship for a long time. The immensely fortunate Gandhari is wise and speaks piteously. O great king! She has borne the grief on account of her sons with great fortitude. I am asking you to act in accordance with my words. Grant the king permission. Let him not die in vain.[18] Let the king follow the ancient path meant for rajarshis. At the end, all rajarshis have resorted to the forest.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Vyasa, extraordinary in his deeds, spoke in this way to the king. The immensely energetic Dharmaraja Yudhishthira replied, “O illustrious one! We respect you. O illustrious one! You are our preceptor. O illustrious one! You are the refuge of the kingdom and the lineage. O illustrious one! I am your son. You are my father, my king and my preceptor. According to

dharma, the son must follow the instructions of the father." Vyasa, supreme among the upholders of dharma, was addressed in this way. O lord of the earth! He again spoke to the immensely energetic Yudhishthira. "O mighty-armed one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! It is exactly as you have said. The king is aged and it is evident that he is in the last stages. O lord of the earth! You and I should grant him the permission. Act according to his wishes and do not cause an obstruction. O Yudhishthira! This is the supreme dharma of rajarshis. Their death should be in the field of battle, or following the proper ordinances, in the forest. O Indra among kings! When your father, Pandu, ruled the earth, he served this king, like a disciple tends to his preceptor. He[19] performed sacrifices with different kinds of dakshina that were piled up as high as hills. He obtained large objects of pleasure and enjoyed them, also protecting his sons. For the thirteen years when you were in exile, he ruled the subjects of the kingdom like sons and enjoyed and gave away many kinds of riches. O tiger among men! With your servants, you have served this king and the illustrious Gandhari as seniors. Grant your father permission. The time has come for him to perform austerities. O Yudhishthira! He does not harbour the slightest bit of anger towards you." With these words, he gave the king permission and Kounteya agreed. After the illustrious Vyasa left for the forest, the king who was Pandu's son spoke these soft and gentle words to his aged father. "I will swiftly follow the instructions of the illustrious Vyasa, your views, the words of the great archer, Kripa, and those of Vidura, Yuyutsu and Sanjaya. All of them are well-wishers of our lineage and I must pay heed to them. O king! However, I am lowering my head in front of you and asking for something. Before going to the hermitage, please eat something."'

## Chapter 1940(9)

Vaishampayana said, 'Having obtained the king's permission, the powerful King Dhritarashtra, followed by Gandhari, went to his own house. Because of the hardships the intelligent one had undergone, he was weak and frail and walked slowly. The king was like the aged leader of an elephant herd. The learned Vidura and the suta, Sanjaya, followed him. So did the great archer, Kripa Sharadvata. Having entered his house, the king performed his morning ablutions. He satisfied the best among brahmanas and then ate. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Gandhari, knowledgable about dharma, and the learned Kunti were honoured by their daughters-in-law with various items and also ate. When they had eaten, Vidura and the others also ate. The Pandavas then sat down around the king who was the foremost among the Kurus. O great king! Kunti's son was seated near him. Touching him on the back with his hand, Ambika's son said, "O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Never be distracted in your tasks in any way. O tiger among kings! In the eight aspects of the kingdom, always have dharma at the forefront.[20] O son! O descendant of the Pandu lineage! You are capable of protecting it in that way. O Kounteya! You are learned. Listen to the dharma of the kingdom. O Yudhishthira! You must always respect those who are learned and aged. You must listen to what they say and act accordingly, without any reflection. O king! You must arise in the morning and following the proper rites, worship them. When the time comes for acting, you should ask them what you should do. O king! O son! O descendant of the Kourava lineage! When you have the welfare of the kingdom

in mind and ask them respectfully, they will tell you everything that should be done for your benefit. All the senses must be controlled like horses. You will then obtain benefit and it will be like your wealth being preserved. The advisers must be tested. They must be pure and must be those whose fathers and grandfathers have also served. They must be self-controlled in all the tasks. Whether in superior or inferior positions, such are the people who should be employed. The spies employed in your kingdom and in that of the enemy must always be tested in many ways and these spies must be unknown to the enemy. The city must be protected well, with firm walls and gates. In every direction, the walkways along which guards march must be such as to permit six people to walk abreast. One must ensure that the gates are adequate and large. They must always be suitably apportioned and protected by machines. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You must always protect yourself and your food[21] using men who are born in noble lineages and have good conduct. They must know about the objectives. This is also true of periods of pleasure and in protecting garlands and seats. O Yudhishthira! The women must be properly protected through aged guards and these must have good conduct, be born in noble lineages and learned. Consultations should be with those who are humble, born in good lineages, accomplished about dharma and artha and upright. One should not consult with too many people. Sometimes one needs to consult all of them, sometimes only a few. The chamber for consultations must be protected well. The place for consultations must be one that one climbs up to.[22] It can also be a forest that is bereft of thorns. However, consultations must not be during the night. All birds and animals that imitate men must be barred from the chamber for consultations and so must stupid and lame people.[23] It is my view that the sins that follow from the divulging of consultations of kings can never be countered in any way. O king! O scorcher of enemies! In the circle of ministers, you must repeatedly speak about the sins that result from the divulging of consultations and the gains if they are not divulged. O Yudhishthira! Ascertain the good and the bad in the city and in the countryside. O king! O scorcher of enemies! Your action must be based on what you get to know."'

## Chapter 1941(10)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O son! O king! Learned and content people must always be employed in the administration of justice and spies must always be employed to observe them. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O Yudhishthira! These men must not be driven by affection. They must ascertain the gravity of the crime and, under the law, impose a punishment that is commensurate. Those addicted to bribery, those who oppress other people's wives and those who are false in conduct warrant the severest of punishments. Depending on the time and the place, those who indulge in calumny, those who are greedy, those who are murderers, those who are rash,[24] those who cause disturbances in assemblies and at the time of pleasure and those who cause a pollution of the varnas should be killed or punished with a fine of gold. In the morning, you must first ensure that all the acts of expenditure are taken care of. You must then attend to ornaments and food. After this, you must always seek to cheer the warriors. In the evening, you must always attend to messengers and spies. The next part of the night must be devoted to determining acts connected with artha. One must always

engage in pleasure at midnight or midday. O bull among the Bharata lineage! You must always undertake all the tasks without any delay. At the right time, you must adorn yourself with ornaments and give away large quantities of dakshina. O son! Like a revolving wheel, in due order, all the duties must be undertaken. Following lawful means, you must always endeavour to fill the treasury. O great king! But you must always avoid duplicity and perversity. Using spies, get to know about enemies who are inside the kingdom. From a distance, use learned men to ensure that the enemies destroy each other. O extender of the Kuru lineage! After examining their deeds, appoint the best servants. Use them to accomplish those tasks, irrespective of whether they have been employed for that particular task or not. O son! The commander of the soldiers must be firm in his vows. He must be brave. He must love you and respect you. He must be capable of enduring hardships. O Pandava! It is your task to ensure that all the noble residents of the countryside and the city have a means of subsistence, like cattle. O Yudhishthira! You must always determine your own weaknesses and the weaknesses of the enemy. Inside the kingdom, there will be brave men. They must be shown proportionate favours, so that, in all tasks, they ensure your welfare. O lord of men! It is your task to enhance the qualities of those who have qualities and are learned. They will then be devoted to you and will not waver, like the great mountain, Meru."'

## Chapter 1942(11)

'Dhritarashtra said, "You must know the provinces[25] that are devoted to you, devoted to the enemy, those who are indifferent to both and those who are neutral. O afflicter of enemies! You must know the four kinds of enemies, all the kinds of assassins, friends and the enemy of an enemy.[26] O foremost among the Kuru lineage! Advisers, the countryside, forts, uneven ground and soldiers must not be wilfully tampered with. O Kounteya! These are the twelve different attributes of the kingdom.[27] O lord! Out of the seventy-two attributes, the ministers are the foremost.[28] Teachers who know about policy have spoken about these mandalas. O Yudhishthira! In this connection, listen to the six techniques.[29] O descendant of the Kuru lineage! One must know the determinants of growth, decay and maintenance of the status quo. O mighty-armed one! Therefore, one must act in accordance with the seventy-two and the six. O Kounteya! When one's own side is strong and the enemy is relatively weak, that is the time when a king should try to seize the enemy. When one's own side is weak, one must try for an alliance. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! One must then try to build up one's store of riches. As soon as one is strong, one must advance without delay. At that time, it is recommended that everyone must be in his own place, without a division in the ranks. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When obliged to surrender territory, it should be infertile land. When obliged to give gold, it should be adulterated. As with the treasury, when obliged to surrender friends, it should be relatively weak ones. When receiving back in turn, those who are skilled about alliances know that the opposite should be practised.[30] O bull among the Bharata lineage! At the time of an alliance, one should try to obtain a prince as a hostage. O son! However, if one faces a calamity and has to give, the opposite should be practised. One must resort to counsel and seek means to escape from that calamity. O Kounteya! When the king is distressed, so are ordinary people. Depending on strength and

weakness, he must simultaneously fight and seek to get rid of the calamity. While himself protecting his own kingdom, he must try to afflict and paralyse the enemy and reduce his treasury. If one desires prosperity, one should not cause injury to vassals who have accepted subjugation. O Kounteya! One should not cause injury to someone who desires to conquer the entire earth.[31] Using one's ministers, one must seek to create dissension among the tribes.[32] The virtuous must be nurtured and the wicked must be punished. O tiger among kings! If a weak king is attacked by a stronger one, he must follow the behaviour of cane, and yield.[33] When a strong king advances against a weak king, the weak one must use conciliation and other means to gradually dissuade him. If he fails, he must fight, using his advisers, his treasury, the citizens, using the staff, and all those who wish to do him good.[34] Despite attacking with all his best devices, one after another, if it becomes an impossible task, he must then seek emancipation by giving up his body."'

## Chapter 1943(12)

'Dhritarashtra said, "O supreme among kings! Consider war and peace. O Yudhishthira! For both of these, three kinds of situations and many kinds of techniques have been thought of.[35] O Indra among kings! For your own self, you must progressively and calmly, examine both of these.[36] You must remember not to advance against an enemy who is content, nourished and strong. At such a time, the opposite is recommended and one must excuse oneself. O Indra among kings! It is better to retreat and wait for a time to attack. One must act so as to cause hardship to the enemy and create dissension in his ranks. After creating this great affliction, one must create great destruction through a battle. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Before advancing, a king who knows about the sacred texts thinks of the three kinds of strength that characterize him and the enemy—enterprise, power over the soldiers and the strength of good advisers. A man who possesses these, advances. If one doesn't possess these, one acts in the opposite way. The king must accumulate the strength of riches, the strength of friends, the strength of forests, the strength of servants and the strength of traders. O king! Of these, the strength of riches and the strength of friends are superior. It is my view that the strength of servants and the strength of traders are equal. O king! The strength of spies is equal to either of these. When all this strength has accumulated, the king knows it is time. O lord of men! Know that calamities kings face are of many different types. O Kouravya! Listen to what these separate types are. O king! O descendant of the Pandu lineage! There are many ways of countering these calamities. A king must use conciliation, pacification and the others. O scorcher of enemies! When united with the six kinds of strength, a king must advance, combining these with the strength of his own qualities and considering the time and the place. A king who desires growth must not advance unless the soldiers are content, nourished and strong. A king can also falsely claim that these exist and advance. To destroy the enemy, the king must advance along a river that has quivers as stones, horses and chariots as currents, standards as trees that cover the banks and large numbers of foot soldiers and elephants as mire. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O lord! The sacred texts known to Ushanas have recommended battle formations in the form of a cart, a lotus and a vajra. Having deprecated the enemy's soldiers, act to increase cheer in your own soldiers. This is irrespective of whether you are

fighting in your own territory or the enemy's territory. After having rested, the king must hurl the best men against the enemy. Knowing the state of one's own kingdom, one should resort to conciliation and the other techniques. O great king! The body must be protected in every possible way. One must ensure supreme benefit for one's own self, in this world and in the world after death. A king who listens to these auspicious words protects the subjects according to dharma and obtains this world. After death, he obtains heaven. O foremost among the Kuru lineage! For the welfare of the subjects, this is the way you must act. O son! You must always act so as to obtain both the worlds. Bhishma has spoken to you about this earlier, and so have Krishna and Vidura. O supreme among kings! However, since I bear affection towards you, I must also tell you. O one who grants a lot of dakshina! Following the law, you must do all of this. You will then be loved by the subjects and will obtain happiness in heaven. A king who performs one thousand horse sacrifices and one who protects the subjects according to dharma obtains fruits that are equal."'

## Chapter 1944(13)

'Yudhishthira said, "O lord of the earth! I will faithfully do all of this. O bull among kings! But you should instruct me yet again. Bhishma has gone to heaven and Madhusudana has left.[37] Vidura and Sanjaya will also go.[38] Who else is capable of speaking to me? I will adhere to whatever you instruct me today. O lord of the earth! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You should not hold yourself back."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'The rajarshi was thus addressed by the intelligent Dharmaraja. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He took Kounteya's permission and said, "O son! Desist. My strength has been exhausted." Having said this, the king and Gandhari entered their house. The queen Gandhari followed dharma. She knew about time. Her husband was like Prajapati. When he was seated, at the right time, she said, "You have obtained the permission of maharshi Vyasa himself. Having obtained Yudhishthira's permission, when will you leave for the forest?" Dhritarashtra replied, "O Gandhari! My great-souled father has himself given me permission. After I have obtained Yudhishthira's permission, I will leave for the forest, without any delay. All my sons engaged in a deceitful act of gambling with the dice. In their names, in the annual funeral ceremony, I wish to give away riches to ordinary people, inviting them to my own house." Having said this, the king told Dharmaraja and, instructed by the king, he brought everything that was required. All the well-wishers, all the ordinary people, all the inhabitants of the city and all the inhabitants of the countryside assembled. Brahmanas and kings came from many countries. The king emerged from his inner quarters and saw all of them. The immensely energetic King Dhritarashtra said, "Brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras who have assembled from Kurujangala. Listen to me attentively. You and the Kurus have lived together for a long time. You are affectionate towards each other and are engaged in each other's welfare. The time has presented itself and I am going to speak about it to you now. Without thinking about it, you should act in accordance with my words. With Gandhari, I have made up my mind to leave for the forest. I have obtained the permission of Vyasa and the king who is Kunti's son. You should also grant me leave and not act contrary to this. There has been an eternal fraternal affection between you and

us, the king and the subjects. It is my view that this does not exist in any other country. I am exhausted. I am old and have lost my sons. With the unblemished Gandhari, I have fasted and have become emaciated. I am extremely happy that the kingdom has passed on to Yudhishthira. O excellent ones! I think that joy is greater than what I would have obtained from Duryodhana's prosperity. I am blind, aged and have lost my sons. O immensely fortunate ones! Other than the forest, what other refuge can there be for me? You should grant me permission." O bull among the Bharata lineage! On hearing his words, all those from Kurujangala wept, their voices choking with tears. They were overcome with sorrow and grief. The immensely energetic Dhritarashtra spoke to them yet again.'

## Chapter 1945(14)

'Dhritarashtra said, "Shantanu ruled this entire earth. In that way, protected by Bhishma, so did Vichitravirya. There is no doubt that you know about that protection. I loved my brother Pandu. It is known to you that he also protected you in that way. O unblemished ones! I have also sought to serve you well. O immensely fortunate ones! If I have failed to do it properly, or if I have been distracted in this, you should forgive me. After all, without any thorns, Duryodhana also enjoyed this kingdom. He was foolish and evil in intelligence. However, he also protected you. Because of the crimes of that evil-minded one and his insolence, and because of what I myself did, there has been this great carnage of kings. Whether I have done something good or whether I have done something bad, you should not bear it in your heart and you should grant me permission. This king is aged and miserable. His sons have been slain. He is the son of your earlier kings. Because of these reasons, you should grant me permission. This aged ascetic is miserable. Her sons have been slain. Gandhari is afflicted on account of her sons. Like me, she is also asking you. You know that our sons have been killed. We are aged and unhappy. O fortunate ones! We have sought refuge with you. Grant us leave. This Kourava king, Yudhishthira, is Kunti's son. You must look after him, in prosperity and in adversity. However, he will never face any adversity. His four brothers are greatly energetic and are his advisers. All of them know about dharma and artha and are like the guardians of the world. The illustrious Brahma is the lord of all creatures in the universe. The greatly energetic Yudhishthira will protect you, like him. I have now said what I should certainly have said. I am handing all of you over to Yudhishthira as a trust. I have handed you over to this brave one as a trust. If there is anything disagreeable that my sons have done, or anything else by anyone on our side, you should forgive that. Earlier, you have never harboured any anger towards me. Your devotion towards me is exceedingly great. I join my hands in salutation and bow down before you. Their[39] intelligence was fickle. They were greedy and acted as they willed. O unblemished ones! With Gandhari, I seek forgiveness for everything."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'The king spoke in this way to the inhabitants of the city and the countryside. Their voices were choked with tears. They looked at each other and said nothing.'

## Chapter 1946(15)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Thus addressed by the aged Kouravya king, the inhabitants of the city and the countryside were almost senseless. The king saw that they were standing in silence, their voices choked with tears. King Dhritarashtra again spoke to them. “O excellent ones! I am aged. My sons have been slain. I am lamenting in many ways. I am distressed. With my lawful wife, who knows about dharma, I have obtained the permission of my father, Krishna Dvaipayana to go to the forest. The king, who knows about dharma, has also agreed. O unblemished ones! With my head bowed down, I am again beseeching you, along with Gandhari. You should grant us permission.” O king! Hearing the piteous words of the king of the Kurus, all those who had assembled from Kurujangala wept. They covered their faces with their hands and their upper garments. Tormented by grief, like fathers and mothers,[40] they wept for a while. At the prospect of Dhritarashtra’s departure, their hearts were empty. Because of the misery they bore, it was as if they had lost their senses, at the prospect of being separated from the king of the Kurus. But they made a great deal of effort and controlled it. They spoke softly to each other. O king! All of them then got together, chose a brahmana, and charged him with the task of conveying their own words to the king. He was aged, revered and accomplished about artha. O king! He was learned about many hymns. His name was Samba and he sought to speak.

‘The brahmana was intelligent and eloquent. He took the permission of the great king and the entire assembly and spoke to the king. “O king! These people have entrusted their words to me. O brave one! O lord of men! I am telling you those words. Listen. O Indra among kings! O lord! Everything that you have said is true. There is no falsehood in your words. We wish each other well. In this royal lineage, there has been no king who has not protected the subjects or has not been loved by the subjects. You have protected us like a father and like a brother. O king! Nor has Duryodhana done anything that is improper. O great king! Act in accordance with what the sage who is Satyavati’s son, who knows about dharma, has said. He is our supreme preceptor. Abandoned by you, we will soon be overcome with sorrow and grief. O king! We will be without your hundreds of qualities. O king! We were protected by Shantanu, King Chitrangada and by your father, Bhishma, whose valour was deep. With the help of your intelligence, King Pandu also protected us in that way. In that fashion, King Duryodhana also protected us well. O king! Your son has not committed the slightest bit of falsehood. We trusted that king as if he was our own father. You know that perfectly well. O king! Protected by Kunti’s intelligent son and sustained by his fortitude, we have enjoyed happiness for thousands of years.[41] Your lineage has come down from ancient rajarshis and has Kuru, Samvarana, the intelligent Bharata and others.[42] The one with dharma in his soul[43] followed good conduct and gave away large quantities of donations. O great king! One cannot speak about the slightest bit of deviation in him. Protected and nurtured by you, we have always lived in great happiness. There has not been the slightest bit of falsehood in you and your son. You have spoken about Duryodhana’s role in the destruction of the kin. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! In that connection, this is what I have to convey to you.”’

## Chapter 1947(16)

‘The brahmana said, “The destruction that the Kurus confronted was not caused by Duryodhana, you, Karna or Subala’s son.[44] We know it was destiny and no one was capable of countering it. Destiny is incapable of being thwarted through manliness. O great king! Eighteen akshouhinis assembled. The bulls among warriors killed them over eighteen days. O king! They were Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and the others, the great-souled Karna, the brave Yuyudhana, Dhrishtadyumna and the four sons of Pandu, Bhima, Arjuna and the twins. O king! This destruction of people has been accomplished by the forces of destiny. In particular, in this world, there is no doubt that kshatriyas and relatives of kshatriyas must be slain in a battle, using weapons. Those tigers among men possessed learning and the strength of their arms. They destroyed everyone on earth, including horses, chariots and elephants. Your son, the king, was not responsible for that crime against the great-minded ones. Nor were you or your servants responsible, or Karna, or Soubala. Thousands of kings and the best among the Kurus were destroyed. However, everything was because of destiny. What else can be said about this? We hold the view that you are our preceptor and the lord of the entire world. You have dharma in your soul. We forgive your son. With his aides, that king has obtained the world meant for heroes. With the foremost among the brahmanas, let him enjoy happiness in heaven. May you also obtain the auspicious and be established in supreme dharma. O supreme among Bharatas! May you completely know everything that is sacred. The Pandavas are bulls among men. It can be seen that they are capable of ruling heaven. Why should they then be unable to establish their status on earth? O best among those of the Kuru lineage! The Pandavas possess the ornaments of good conduct. We, the subjects, will dwell with them in prosperity and in adversity. Pandava[45] protects like all the large number of kings who have preceded him. He gives liberally to brahmanas. He is always far-sighted and firm in his wisdom. He is like Vaishravana.[46] Kunti’s great-minded son has advisers who are not inferior. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He is pure and compassionate, even towards his enemies. He is upright and intelligent and always looks upon us as his sons. O rajarshi! Because of their association with Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna and the others will never act in a disagreeable way towards the people. O Kouravya! They are gentle and mild, but like the venom of snakes towards those who are fierce. They are brave and great-souled, engaged in the welfare of the residents. Kunti, Panchali, Ulupi and Satvati[47] will never do anything that goes against these people. Your affection towards us has been extended by Yudhishthira and the residents of the city and the countryside will not disregard it. Even if these men engage in adharma, these virtuous maharatha sons of Kunti are always devoted to dharma and will protect them. O king! Therefore, do not have any mental disquiet on account of Yudhishthira. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Engage in the acts of dharma. We bow down before you.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘These words were full of dharma and possessed a flow of all the superior qualities. Hearing them, all the people applauded and accepted them. Dhritarashtra repeatedly applauded those words. He then gently dismissed all the ordinary people. They honoured the king and cast auspicious glances towards him. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He also joined his hands in salutation and honoured the people back. With Gandhari, the king entered his house. Listen to what he did when the night was over.’

## Chapter 1948(17)

Vaishampayana said, ‘When night was over, Dhritarashtra, Ambika’s son, sent Vidura to Yudhishthira’s house. The greatly energetic one, supreme among all those who are intelligent, went there. Having gone there, he spoke these words to King Yudhishthira, the lord who had no decay. “O great king! Dhritarasthra has consecrated himself for departure to the forest. The king will leave for the forest on the day of the full moon in the month of Kartika.[48] O best among those of the Kuru lineage! He desires some riches. He wishes to give this away at a funeral ceremony for the great-souled Gangeya, Drona, Somadatta, the intelligent Bahlika, all his sons, the well-wishers who have been killed and, if you allow it, for the wicked Saindhava.”[49] Hearing Vidura’s words, Yudhishthira and Gudakesha Pandava[50] were delighted and applauded them. However, Bhima was unwavering in his anger and did not accept Vidura’s words. The greatly energetic one remembered what Duryodhana had done. ‘Phalguna understood Bhimasena’s thoughts. Kiriti lowered his face and spoke these words to Bhima. “O Bhima! Our aged father has consecrated himself for going to the forest. He wishes to give something for the funeral ceremonies of all the well-wishers. Kourava wishes to give away riches that have been conquered by you. O mighty-armed one! It is for Bhishma and the others. You should grant permission. O mighty-armed one! It is good fortune that Dhritarashtra is asking us now. Behold the progress of time. Earlier, we used to ask him. This king used to be the lord of the entire earth earlier. With his offspring killed by the enemy, he now desires to go to the forest. O tiger among men! You should not consider any option other than giving. O mighty-armed one! Everything else will bring ill fame and will be adharma. We serve the lord and king who is our elder brother. O bull among the Bharata lineage! From him, we should learn to give and not refuse.” When Kounteya said this, Dharmaraja applauded these words. However, Bhimasena angrily spoke these words in reply. “O Phalguna! We should perform funeral rites for Bhishma, King Somadatta, Bhurishrava, rajarshi Bahlika, the great-souled Drona and the other well-wishers. Kunti will give for Karna. O tiger among men! The king should not perform funeral rites for the Kouravas. That is my view. Let the enemy not find an opportunity to rejoice. Let Duryodhana and all the others move from misery to greater misery. They were the worst of the lineage and destroyed everything on earth. How can you now forget that enmity of twelve years and the departure for a period of concealment, which increased Droupadi’s grief? What was the affection Dhritarashtra showed towards us then? We attired ourselves in black antelope skins and our ornaments and adornments were lost. With the daughter of Panchala, we followed the king then. Where were Drona, Bhishma and Somadatta then? For thirteen years we dwelt there, roaming from one forest to another forest. Your elder father did not cast a paternal eye towards us then. O Partha! When we were defeated in the gambling match, have you forgotten what this wicked one, the worst of the lineage, asked Vidura? ‘What has been won?’” When this was said, King Yudhishthira, Kunti’s intelligent son, rebuked his brother and asked him to be quiet.’

## Chapter 1949(18)

‘Arjuna said, “O Bhima! You are my elder brother and my senior and I am not interested in saying anything more. Rajarshi Dhritarashtra must always be honoured. Virtuous people, the best among men, remember the good deeds that have been done to them. They do not remember crimes and the breaking of agreements. O Kshatta! Convey my words to the Kourava king. I will give him whatever he desires on account of his sons and for Bhishma and all the others, all the well-wishers who helped our cause. O lord! It will be given from my store of riches. Let Bhima not be greatly distressed at this.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘When Arjuna spoke in this way, Yudhishthira honoured him. But Bhimasena cast angry glances at Dhananjaya. The intelligent Yudhishthira spoke these words to Vidura. “The king should not be angry at Bhimasena. In the forest, the intelligent Bhima was afflicted by cold, rain and heat and many kinds of hardships. That is known to you. However, convey my words to the king who is a bull among the Bharata lineage. He can take everything that he wishes from my house. Bhima sorrows greatly and has exhibited this intolerance. The king should not take these words to heart. Whatever riches exist in my house and that of Arjuna’s, the great king is the owner of all of that. Tell the king these words. Let the king give to brahmanas and spend whatever he wishes. Let him repay the debt to his sons and well-wishers. This body of mine also belongs to that lord of men. O Kshatta! Knowing this, how can there be any doubt about the riches?”’

## Chapter 1950(19)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The king spoke in this way to Vidura, supreme among intelligent ones. He went to Dhritarashtra and conveyed these words of deep import. “I first spoke about your message to King Yudhishthira. Having listened to my words, the immensely radiant one praised them. The greatly energetic Bibhatsu has given his houses, the riches in those houses and even his life to you. O rajarshi! Your son, Dharmaraja, has placed the kingdom, his life, his riches and everything else at your disposal. However, Bhima remembered all the misery and the many kinds of hardship. The mighty-armed one was filled with anger and sighed. However, because of the brotherly affection he bears towards the king who follows dharma in his conduct and his brother Bibhatsu, the mighty-armed one has also given his permission. Bhima remembered the enmity and the wicked deeds that were perpetrated. Dharmaraja has said that you should not be enraged with him. ‘O lord of men![51] This is generally the dharma of kshatriyas.[52] Vrikodara has been devoted to following the dharma of kshatriyas in battle. O king! I and Arjuna repeatedly crave your pardon for what Vrikodara has done. You are our lord. O king! As you wish, give whatever riches we possess. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You are the owner of all the lives in this kingdom. For the funeral rites of your sons and to give to brahmanas, here are jewels, cattle, male servants, female servants, goats and sheep. O foremost among the Kuru lineage! Bring them and give them to brahmanas, the distressed, the old, the blind and the weak. O Vidura! On the king’s instructions, let an assembly hall be constructed and let it be stocked with many kinds of juices, drinks and food. Let places for cattle to drink from be constructed. Let diverse kinds of auspicious acts be performed.’ This is what the king and Partha Dhananjaya told me. You should tell me what needs to be done next.” This is what Vidura said and

Dhritarashtra applauded this. O Janamejaya! He made up his mind to give large quantities of gifts on the day of the full moon in Kartika.'

## Chapter 1951(20)

Vaishampayana said, 'Vidura spoke in this way to King Dhritarashtra. The king was delighted at what the king[53] and Jishnu had done. For the sake of Bhishma, his sons and his well-wishers, he examined and invited thousands of brahmanas and superior rishis. The supreme among kings instructed that food, drink, vehicles, spreads, gold, gems, jewels, female servants, male servants, garments, blankets, hides, gems,[54] villages, fields, goats, sheep, ornaments, elephants, horses, maidens and the best of women should be readied for the brahmanas. He named Drona, Bhishma, Somadatta, Bahlika, King Duryodhana, his other sons and all the well-wishers, with Jayadratha as the foremost, separately and gave these away in their respective names. With Yudhishthira's sanction, the funeral ceremony prospered, with large amounts of cattle, riches, dakshina and diverse kinds of wealth and jewels given away. On Yudhishthira's instructions, men, enumerators and writers incessantly told the king, "Command us. What should be given? Whom should it be given to? Everything is here." They recorded this. No sooner had he spoken, than these objects would be seen. On the instructions of the intelligent king who was Kunti's son, a thousand was given to the one who should be given one hundred and ten thousand was given to the one who should be given one thousand.[55] Like the monsoon showering down rain on the ground, the king[56] was like an ocean and showered down a flow of riches on the brahmanas, thereby satisfying them. After this, the king segregated all the varnas. The king flooded them with food and drink. The garments were like foam, the jewels were like currents, the drums were like the roar of the waves. Cattle and horses were like whirlpools. There were extensive amounts of women and gems. The villages were like crocodiles on the shore. The water in that ocean was made out of jewels and gold. The ocean that was Dhritarashtra flooded the earth. O great king! Thus, he donated at that funeral ceremony and gave for his sons, his grandsons, his forefathers, for himself and for Gandhari. After he had given away many gifts, he became exhausted. The extender of the Kuru lineage then terminated the sacrifice of donations. In this way, the Kouravya king performed that festival of donations. There was a lot of dakshina that was succulent[57] and actors and dancers performed incessantly. For ten days, the king who was Ambika's son gave away gifts in this way. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He thus freed himself from the debt to his sons and grandsons.'

## Chapter 1952(21)

Vaishampayana said, 'When it was morning, King Dhritarashtra, Ambika's son, determined that the time had come for departure to the forest. He summoned the brave Pandavas. With Gandhari, the intelligent one greeted them in the proper way. Using brahmanas accomplished in the Vedas, he

performed the rites associated with the full moon in Kartika, agnihotra being the foremost. He attired himself in bark and deerskin. Surrounded by his daughters-in-law, the king emerged from his house. The king who was Vichitravirya's son departed in this way. The Kourava and Pandava women and all the others who belonged to the royal lineage of the Kouravas were distressed and lamented loudly. Using parched grain, the king cheerfully worshipped the wonderful house where he had lived. The Indra among men met all the large numbers of servants, said farewell to them and left. King Yudhishthira trembled and joined his hands in salutation. In a voice that was choking with tears, he exclaimed, "O virtuous and great king! This is a time for lamentation. Where are you going?" He said this and fell down on the ground. Arjuna was tormented by great grief. The foremost among the Bharata lineage sighed repeatedly. He restrained Yudhishthira and told him that he should not act in this way. However, he was himself distressed. Vrikodara, Phalguna, Madri's brave sons, Vidura, Sanjaya, the son of the vaishya,[58] Goutama,[59] Dhoumya and other brahmanas followed the king, their voices choking with tears. Gandhari's eyes were covered with a strip of cloth.[60] For support, her hand was placed on Kunti's shoulder, who walked ahead. King Dhritarashtra advanced cheerfully, grasping Gandhari's shoulder with his hand. Krishna Droupadi, Yadavi,[61] Kouravi Uttara, who had had a son as offspring,[62] Chitrangada, other women and daughters-in-law advanced with the king. O king! Their lamentations were piteous, like the shrieks of she-ospreys. In every direction, brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra women also emerged. O king! The large numbers of citizens of Gajasahvya were distressed at the departure. O king! This was just like in earlier times, when after the gambling match, they had witnessed the departure of the Pandavas from the assembly hall of the Kouravas. There were women who had never seen the sun or had been seen by it. But when that Indra among men, the Indra among the Kouravas, left for the forest, they were afflicted by grief and emerged onto the royal roads.'

## Chapter 1953(22)

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! A great uproar arose from the women and men who were standing atop the palaces or on the ground. The royal road was crowded with men and women. With difficulty, the king advanced along that, trembling and with his hands joined in salutation. He emerged from Gajasahvya through the main gate and repeatedly took his leave from those large numbers of people. Vidura decided that the time was right for him to also go to the forest with the king. The chief adviser and suta, Sanjaya, Gavalgana's son, also took the same decision. King Dhritarashtra persuaded Kripa and maharatha Yuyutsu to return and handed them over to Yudhishthira. After the citizens had returned, the king[63] sought Dhritarashtra's permission to return, with the women from the inner quarters of the palace. O bull among the Bharata lineage! He told his mother, Kunti, "I will go with the king.[64] You should return. O queen! Surrounded by your daughters-in-law, you should return to the city. The king is devoted to dharma and is firm in his resolution that he will devote himself to austerities." With tears flowing down from his eyes, Dharmaraja said this. But Kunti clung on to Gandhari and continued to advance. She said, "O great king! Never disregard Sahadeva. O king! He has always been affectionate towards you and me. Karna never retreated from battle and you must

always remember him. It is because of my stupid intelligence that the brave one was destroyed. O son! My wicked heart is certainly made out of iron. Despite my being unable to see the son of the sun, it has not shattered into a hundred fragments. O destroyer of enemies! That being the case, what can I possibly do now? It is my sin that I did not reveal that he was the son of the sun. O mighty-armed one! Therefore, with your brothers, I hope you will give excellent gifts in his name. O slayer of enemies! He was your elder. O afflicter of enemies! Always be devoted to Droupadi. O extender of the Kuru lineage! Always look after Bhimasena, Arjuna and Nakula. O brave one! You have to bear the burden of the Kuru lineage now. I will dwell in the forest now and devote myself to serving my father-in-law and mother-in-law.[65] I will dwell with Gandhari, cover myself with filth and devote myself to austerities." Yudhishthira had dharma in his soul. Thus addressed, he controlled himself. With his brothers, he was immersed in great grief and did not say anything.

'After having thought for some time, though he was distressed, full of reflection and overcome by sorrow, Yudhishthira, Dharma's son, spoke to his mother. "Why are you going away? You should not speak in this way. I will not give you permission to go. You should show us your favours. O beautiful one! In earlier times, you spoke agreeable words to energize us. You spoke to us about Vidula's words and you should not abandon that principle.[66] I have obtained this earth after slaying the kings. Those were your words of wisdom, received by me through Vasudeva, bull among men. I had heard about your intelligence earlier. Where has that gone now? You spoke to us about adherence to the dharma of kshatriyas, but you wish to deviate from those now. How will you dwell alone in the forest after abandoning us, the kingdom and these illustrious daughters-in-law? Show me your favours." Her eyes flowing with tears, Kunti heard these words from her son. However, with tears flowing from her eyes, she continued to advance and Bhima spoke to her. "O Kunti! You should enjoy this kingdom that has been conquered by your sons. Having obtained it, why does your mind turn away from the dharma of kings? Earlier, why did you then ask us to destroy the earth? For whom do you wish to give it up and go to the forest? When we were children, why did you bring us back from the forest?[67] Madri's sons are overcome with sorrow and grief. O mother! O illustrious one! Be gratified and do not go to the forest. Enjoy Yudhishthira's prosperity, conquered through Partha's[68] strength." But she had made up her mind that the time had come to go to the forest. Though her sons lamented in many ways, she did not pay any attention to their words. Droupadi's face was distressed. As her mother-in-law left for the forest, she wept, and with Bhadra,[69] followed her. The immensely wise one[70] had made up her mind to leave for the forest. She repeatedly glanced at her sons, who were weeping, but proceeded. The Pandavas, the servants and the women from the inner quarters continued to follow. She restrained them and tearfully, spoke these words to her sons.'

## Chapter 1954(23)

'Kunti said, "O mighty-armed one! O Pandava! It is exactly as you have described it. O king! Earlier, when you were suffering from lassitude, I reprimanded you. Your kingdom was lost in the gambling match. You were dislodged from happiness. You were defeated by your relatives and I reprimanded you. How could Pandu's sons, bulls among men, be destroyed? How could their fame be

destroyed? That is the reason I goaded you into action. All of you are Indra's equal. You are the equal of the gods in valour. You should not have to depend on others. That is the reason I acted in that way. You are best among those who uphold dharma. You are a king who is Vasava's equal. You should not have returned to the forest and undergone hardships there. That is the reason I goaded you. Bhima is known for his great valour and manliness, equal to that of ten thousand elephants. I goaded you so that he did not face a decline. Vijaya[71] is Vasava's equal and is younger to Bhimasena. I goaded you so that he did not suffer from lassitude. Nakula and Sahadeva always follow their seniors. I goaded you so that they did not suffer from hunger and lassitude. This buxom and dark one is beautiful, with large eyes. She was unnecessarily oppressed in the assembly hall. Then, while all of you looked on, she trembled like a plantain tree. The one with the unblemished limbs was in her season then and was won over in the gambling match. I goaded you so that she didn't have to go through with these difficulties again. The foolish Duhshasana dragged her along, like a servant girl. I knew all this, about the defeat of our lineage. The Kurus, my father-in-law and the others, were distressed then. She desired a protector, but was like a she-osprey in the grasp of a predator. The wicked one, whose intelligence had been destroyed, seized her by the hair. O king! When Duhshasana did that, I lost my senses. To increase your energy, I goaded you then. O sons! I recounted the words of Vidula. How could a royal lineage that included my sons be destroyed? O sons! You were born from Pandu and me. That is the reason I goaded you then. If a king destroys his own lineage, how can his sons and grandsons obtain the worlds that are meant for the performers of good deeds? O son! Earlier, thanks to my husband, I had enjoyed the great fruits of the kingdom. I had given away large quantities of gifts. Following the rites, I had drunk soma. I didn't urge Vasudeva to obtain any fruits for my own self. It was for your sakes that I flooded you with Vidula's words. O sons! I did not desire the fruits of the kingdom, conquered by my sons. O lords! Through austerities, I desire the sacred worlds obtained by my husband. I will serve my father-in-law and mother-in-law, who will dwell in the forest. O Yudhishthira! I will dry myself up through austerities. O best among the Kurus! With Bhimasena and the others, return. Turn your intelligence towards dharma and may your mind be great."'

## Chapter 1955(24)

Vaishampayana said, 'O supreme among kings! Hearing Kunti's words, the Pandavas were ashamed.[72] With Panchali, the unblemished ones returned. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! On seeing Kunti go away, a great uproar of lamentation arose from the women of the inner quarters. Having been unable to persuade Pritha to return, the Pandavas circumambulated the king[73] and withdrew. The great king, Dhritarashtra, Ambika's son, supported himself on Gandhari and Vidura and spoke. "It is better for the queen who is Yudhishthira's mother to return. Everything that Yudhishthira has said is the truth. The prosperity of her sons is great and there are great fruits there. Why should one foolishly abandon one's sons and proceed to the forest along impassable ways? She can perform austerities in the kingdom. She can perform austerities, give gifts and observe vows. She is capable of doing this and not doing it would be bad policy. Let her listen to my words. O Gandhari! I am satisfied with the service of my daughter-in-law. O one who knows about dharma! Therefore,

you should give her permission to return." Thus addressed by the king, Subala's daughter spoke to Kunti. She repeated everything that the king had said and also added her own words. However, the queen[74] had made up her mind to reside in the forest. Kunti was virtuous and devoted to dharma and it was impossible to dissuade her. The women of the Kuru lineage discerned that she was firm in her resolution. On seeing that the best of the Kuru lineage[75] had withdrawn, they began to weep. The Parthas and all the women from the inner quarters returned. The immensely wise king, Dhritarashtra, proceeded to the forest.

'The Pandavas were distressed and overcome by sorrow and grief. With the women, all of them used their vehicles to return to the city. The city of Hastinapura, with its women, aged and young, was completely silent and there were no festivities. All the Pandavas were angry and also disinterested. Without Kunti, they were extremely miserable, like calves separated from their mother.

'The same day, Dhritarashtra reached a place that was some distance away. The lord resided there, on the banks of the Bhagirathi. The best of brahmanas, accomplished in the Vedas, followed the prescribed rites and kindled a sacrificial fire, in a spot that had ascetics. A sacrificial fire was also lit for the aged king. Following the ordinances, the king offered oblations into the fire. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! With evening having arrived, he worshipped the one with the one thousand rays. Vidura and Sanjaya used kusha grass to prepare a bed for the king, the brave one among the Kurus. Not very far from that, they prepared another one for Gandhari. Yudhishthira's mother, Kunti, was devoted to virtuous vows. She lay down on a bed of kusha grass, not far from Gandhari. Vidura and the others slept within a hearing distance. As instructed, the brahmanas and the officiating priests also followed suit. The foremost among the brahmanas kindled a fire and chanted. That night was as pleasurable as a *brahmi* night.[76] When night was over, they performed their morning ablutions. Following the rites, all of them offered oblations into the fire and proceeded again. Still fasting, they glanced towards the northern direction. That first day's residence had been miserable. They had sorrowed. The inhabitants of the city and the countryside had also grieved.'

## Chapter 1956(25)

Vaishampayana said, 'Following Vidura's advice, the king dwelt on the banks of the Bhagirathi, amidst the dwelling places of many sacred people. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Large numbers of brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras, residents of the kingdom, came to visit the king there. They surrounded the king and he delighted them by conversing with them. Following the prescribed rites, he honoured them[77] and their disciples and took their leave. When it was evening, the king and Gandhari immersed themselves in the Ganga and purified themselves in the appropriate manner. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Separately, all the others also bathed in that tirtha. Vidura and the others performed all the rites there. O king! When he had performed his ablutions, Pritha, Kuntibhoja's daughter, brought her aged father-in-law and Gandhari to the banks of the Ganga. For the king, the officiating priests erected a sacrificial altar there. The king, devoted to the truth, offered oblations to the fire there. From the banks of the Bhagirathi, the king then proceeded to Kurukshetra, with his followers. He was learned, self-restrained and in control of his senses. The

king, the rajarshi, arrived at the hermitage of the learned and intelligent Shatayupa and met him. That scorcher of enemies used to be the great king of Kekaya. The lord of men had handed over his wealth to his son and had entered the forest. O king! Following the prescribed rites, he welcomed the extender of the Kuru lineage. With the king, he then went to Vyasa's hermitage. The king who was the descendant of the Kourava lineage[78] was initiated there. After this, he began to reside in Shatayupa's hermitage. O king! On Vyasa's instructions, the immensely intelligent one instructed the king in all the rites pertaining to dwelling in the forest.[79] O great king! The high-minded King Dhritarashtra engaged himself in austerities and so did his followers. Queen Gandhari attired herself in bark and hides. O great king! In an identical way, with Kunti, she observed similar vows. O king! In deeds, mind, words and sight, they controlled their senses and resorted to supreme austerities. The king's flesh was dried up and he was reduced to bones. His hair was matted and he was attired in hides and bark. Devoid of taints, he performed fierce austerities, like a maharshi. Kshatta was supreme in his intelligence about dharma and artha. With Sanjaya, he served the king and his wife and both of them also cleansed their souls and engaged in supreme austerities. They were attired in bark and rags and became emaciated.'

## Chapter 1957(26)

Vaishampayana said, 'The best of sages, Narada, Parvata and the immensely ascetic Devala came there to see the king. So did Dvaipayana and his disciples, other learned siddhas and the aged rajarshi, Shatayupa, supremely devoted to dharma. O great king! Following the prescribed rites, Kunti worshipped them. Those ascetics were satisfied with this service. O son! Those supreme rishis engaged in conversations about dharma. This delighted the great-souled king, Dhritarashtra. Narada could see everything directly. On one such occasion, at the end of the conversation, the devarshi told all of them this account. "In ancient times, there was a fearless king who was Prajapati's equal. He was known as Sahasrachitya and he was Shatayupa's grandfather. His eldest son was supremely devoted to dharma. Handing over the kingdom to him, King Sahasrachitya, with dharma in his soul, entered the forest. Having transcended all the supreme austerities, the resplendent and great-minded king obtained Purandara's region. O king! On many occasions, on my visits there, I have seen the king engaged in austerities in the great Indra's abode, having burnt down his sins. In that way, King Shailalaya, King Bhagadatta's grandfather, went to the great Indra's abode through the strength of his austerities. There was also a king named Prishaghna, equal to the wielder of the vajra himself. Through his austerities, that king obtained the vault of heaven. O king! It was in this forest that King Purukutsa,[80] Mandhata's son, obtained great success. Narmada, supreme among rivers, became his wife. It was in this forest that the king tormented himself through austerities and went to heaven. There was a king named Shashaloma and he was supremely devoted to dharma. It was in this forest that he tormented himself through austerities and obtained heaven. O king! You have come to this hermitage. Through Dvaipayana's favours, you will obtain the best of success, which is extremely difficult to obtain. O tiger among kings! You will also be surrounded by the prosperity of austerities. With Gandhari, you will reach the end obtained by those great-souled ones. Residing with the slayer of Bala, Pandu always

remembers you. O great king! He will always engage you in what is best for you. The illustrious Gandhari, engaged in serving you, will obtain the worlds with her husband and your daughter-in-law, Kunti, will also go there. She is Yudhishthira's mother and he is eternal dharma. O king! We can see this with our divine sight. Vidura can be seen in the great-souled Yudhishthira. Having purified himself through meditation, Sanjaya will obtain heaven." On hearing this, the great-souled Indra among the Kouravas and his wife were delighted and welcomed these words. They praised Narada's learned words. They worshipped Narada in an unmatched way. O king! All the large number of brahmanas also repeatedly worshipped Narada a lot. They were delighted and this also cheered King Dhritarashtra up.'

## Chapter 1958(27)

Vaishampayana said, 'The best among brahmanas applauded Narada's words. Rajarshi Shatayupa spoke these words to Narada. "O illustrious one! O immensely radiant one! You have increased the Kuru king's faith and all these people's and mine. O devarshi! But there is something I wish to tell you. Please listen attentively. O one who is revered by the worlds! It concerns Dhritarashtra. You possess divine sight and know the truth about everything. O devarshi! You can see the destinations of different kinds of men. You have spoken about the kings who are in the great Indra's abode. O great sage! But you have not spoken about the worlds this king will obtain. O lord! I wish to hear about the regions that will be obtained by this lord of the earth. When will he obtain them? I am asking you. Tell me the truth about that." Thus addressed, Narada spoke words that were pleasant for everyone to hear. The great ascetic with the divine sight was in the midst of all those virtuous ones. "I can always go to Shakra, whenever I wish. Having gone there, I saw Shakra, Shachi's consort. There, I also saw the rajarshi, King Pandu. O king! There was a conversation about Dhritarashtra there, about the extremely difficult austerities that the king was tormenting himself with. O king! I heard what Shakra said. There are three years left in this king's lifespan. After that, with Gandhari, the king will go to Kubera's abode. Dhritarashtra will find pleasure there and will be honoured by the king of the yakshas. He will be adorned in divine ornaments and will travel as he wishes, in a celestial vehicle. He is a rishi's son[81] and has burnt his sins through austerities. The one with dharma in his soul will roam around in the worlds of the gods, the gandharvas and the rakshasas at ease. What you have asked me is a great mystery, even to the gods. However, since I am pleased with you, I have told you. You are also learned about the sacred texts and have burnt your sins through austerities." They heard these sweet words of the devarshi. All of them were extremely happy in their minds and so was the king. Those learned brahmanas conversed in this way with Dhritarashtra and then went away as they desired, along paths meant for those who are successful.'

## Chapter 1959(28)

Vaishampayana said, ‘O king! When the Indra among the Kouravas left for the forest, the Pandavas were overwhelmed by sorrow and grief and were also miserable on account of their mother. All the citizens grieved about the king. The brahmanas conversed about the king. “How will the aged king dwell in that desolate forest? What about the immensely fortunate Gandhari and Pritha Kunti? The rajarshi deserved happiness. How will he find joy in that great forest? With his sons killed, what will be the state of the one who has wisdom for his sight? On being separated from her sons, Kunti has done something that is extremely difficult. She has abandoned the prosperity of the kingdom, cherishing life in the forest instead. What is the state of Vidura, who devotes himself to serving his brother? Gavalgana’s intelligent son is the one who protects the legacy of his lord.” The citizens, even the young, were afflicted by thoughts and sorrow. Here and there, they conversed in this way with each other. All the Pandavas were severely afflicted by grief. For a long time, they sorrowed over their mother, just as they had done so earlier. They also grieved over their father, the aged king who had lost his sons, the immensely fortunate Gandhari and the immensely intelligent Vidura. As they thought in this way, they could find no pleasure, not in the kingdom, not in women and not in studying the Vedas. Thinking about the king, they were overcome with supreme disregard for everything material. They repeatedly remembered the terrible slaughter of the kin, the destruction of the young Abhimanyu in the forefront of the battle and that of the mighty-armed Karna, who did not retreat from an encounter. There were the sons of Droupadi and other well-wishers. Remembering the slaughter of those brave ones, they were cheerless. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The brave ones on earth had been killed, the jewels had been destroyed. They always thought about this and could not sleep. The sons of the queens, Droupadi and the beautiful Subhadra, had been killed. They were also cheerless and miserable. But they saw the son of Virata’s daughter, your father, Parikshit. That is the way your forefathers sustained their lives.’

## Chapter 1960(29)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Those brave tigers among men, the Pandavas, the delight of their mother, remembered their mother and were afflicted by terrible grief. Unlike what they had always done earlier, they no longer devoted themselves to the royal duties. Before this, all of them had performed those tasks of the kingdom. But they no longer did this. They were permeated by sorrow and could find nothing to delight them. Even if they were addressed by someone, they did not honour that person back in reply. Those brave ones were impossible to assail and were like the ocean in gravity. However, because of being afflicted by grief, they seemed to be ignorant. It was as if they had lost their senses. The descendants of the Kuru lineage remembered their mother. “How will the emaciated Pritha be able to bear the burden of the aged couple? How is the king? He has lost his sons and is without a refuge too. With his wife, how will he dwell in a forest that is infested with carnivorous beasts? The relatives of the queen, the immensely fortunate Gandhari, have been slain. How will she follow her aged and blind husband in that desolate forest?” Extremely anxious, this is the way they conversed.

‘They then made up their minds to go and see Dhritarashtra. Sahadeva bowed down before the king and said, “I can see that you have made up your mind to go there. Out of respect for you, I was unable to say that I also desired that. O Indra among kings! It is time for us to go. Through good fortune, I will be able to see how the ascetic Kunti is faring. The aged ascetic will have matted hair. Her limbs will have been wounded from kusha and *kasha*.[82] She has been reared in palaces and mansions and has enjoyed great happiness. She is now exhausted and extremely miserable. When will I see my mother? O bull among the Bharata lineage! The progress of mortals is indeed temporary. The princess Kunti, who enjoyed happiness, is now in a forest.” Hearing Sahadeva’s words, the queen Droupadi, supreme among women, honoured the king and said, “If the queen Pritha is alive, when will I see her? O lord of men! If she is still alive, all of us will be delighted. In this way, may your mind and intelligence always find pleasure in dharma. O Indra among kings! You should now do what is best for us. O king! Know that all the daughters-in-law are ready, with their feet poised. They desire to see Kunti, Gandhari and their father-in-law.” O bull among the Bharata lineage! The queen Panchali addressed the king in this way. He accordingly summoned the commander of the soldiers and instructed him about everything. “Make the soldiers advance, with a large number of chariots and elephants. I wish to see how King Dhritarashtra is in the forest. Let the superintendents of the women be asked to ready many vehicles. Let all the thousands of palanquins be prepared. We need carts, stores, tents, treasuries and artisans. Let the supervisors of the treasuries also advance towards the hermitage in Kurukshetra. Let there not be any restrictions for any of the citizens who wish to see the king and let them be protected well. Let there be cooks and all the overseers of the kitchen. Let many kinds of food and edible items be loaded onto the carts. Let it immediately be announced that we will depart tomorrow. Let diverse kinds of dwelling houses be constructed along the way.” With his brothers, the Pandava king issued these kinds of instructions. Next day, with the women and children in front, the king left. Once outside, the king waited for five days, protecting and waiting for the large number of people who wanted to go. After this, he left for the forest.’

## Chapter 1961(30)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The supreme among the Bharata lineage instructed the soldiers. Those men were like guardians of the worlds and protected everyone, with Arjuna at the front. In delight, a loud roar arose, “Yoke the vehicles. Get ready.” The riders shouted, “Yoke the mounts.” Some men advanced on vehicles, others on horses as swift as thought. There were chariots that were like cities, blazing like the fire. O lord of men! Others were on Indras among elephants or camels. Some advanced on foot. There were warriors who fought with nails and spikes.[83] The residents of the city and the countryside were there, in many kinds of vehicles. Wishing to see Dhritarashtra, they followed the king of the Kurus. On the king’s instructions, the preceptor, Goutama Kripa, assembled all the soldiers and the commanders and advanced towards the hermitage. Yudhishthira, the prosperous king of the Kurus, was surrounded by brahmanas. He was praised by many bards, raconteurs and minstrels. A white umbrella was held aloft his head. The descendant of the Kuru lineage advanced with a large number of chariots. Vrikodara, the performer of terrible deeds, was on

an elephant that was as large as a mountain. The son of the wind god advanced, equipped with machines and implements of war. Madri's sons were astride well-prepared horses. They were cheerful at the prospect of seeing their mother. They were clad in armour and had standards. The immensely energetic Arjuna was on a chariot that was as radiant as the sun. This was yoked to divine and white horses and he followed the king on this. For the large number of women who were on palanquins, Droupadi led the way. The superintendents of the women advanced, showering around large quantities of riches. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The Pandava soldiers were beautiful, with many men and elephants, accompanied by the sounds of flutes and veenas. O lord of the earth! As they advanced, the bulls among the Kurus progressively dwelt along the banks of rivers and beautiful lakes. On Yudhishthira's instructions, the immensely energetic Yuyutsu and Dhoumya, the priest, were left with the task of protecting the city. Progressively, King Yudhishthira reached Kurukshetra. He crossed the extremely sacred river, Yamuna. From a distance, the intelligent rajarshi saw the hermitage of Shatayupa and Kouravya Dhritarashtra. All the people were delighted and entered the forest. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They filled everything with a loud uproar.'

## Chapter 1962(31)

Vaishampayana said, 'When they were some distance away, the Pandavas descended and proceeded on foot. They bowed down in humility and advanced towards the king's hermitage. All the citizens, the residents of the kingdom, the women and the foremost among the Kurus followed them on foot. The Pandavas reached Dhritarashtra's lonely hermitage, only frequented by a large number of deer and beautiful with groves of plantain trees. There were ascetics there, engaged in different kinds of vows. When the Pandavas arrived, they were curious and came forward to see them. His voice choking with tears, the king asked them, "Where is the upholder of the Kourava lineage? Where has our elder father gone?" They replied, "The lord has gone to bathe in the Yamuna and to collect flowers and water." On foot, all of them swiftly proceeded along the path that was indicated to them and saw him from a distance. Wishing to see their father, they advanced swiftly. Sahadeva quickly dashed towards Pritha. Weeping aloud, the intelligent one touched his mother's feet. On seeing her beloved son, tears also flowed down her cheeks. She raised her son and embraced him with her arms, informing Gandhari that Sahadeva had come. Then Pritha saw the king, Bhimasena, Arjuna and Nakula and swiftly came towards them. She was ahead of the couple whose sons had been killed and was dragging them along. Seeing her, they[84] fell down at her feet. The great-minded and intelligent lord, the king,[85] recognized them through their voices and touch. Showering down tears and following the prescribed rites, the great-souled ones greeted the king, Gandhari and their mother. They took away the water pots and carried those themselves. The Pandavas were again comforted by their mother and regained their senses. The women, whose husbands were lions among men, the warriors and the inhabitants of the city and the countryside saw the king. King Yudhishthira presented each of them, announcing their names and their families and they were honoured back in return. Surrounded by them, the king's[86] eyes were filled with tears of joy and he thought himself to be back in his house in the city of Gajasahvya. With Gandhari and the intelligent Kunti, the king greeted his

daughters-in-law, Krishna and the others and was delighted. He went to the hermitage, populated by siddhas and charanas. He wished to see it, since it was populated by the visitors, like the firmament by large numbers of stars.'

## Chapter 1963(32)

Vaishampayana said, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! With his brothers, whose beautiful eyes were like lotus petals and who were tigers among men, the king resided in that hermitage. There were immensely fortunate ascetics who had assembled from many countries. They wished to see the sons of the king of the Kurus, the broad-chested Pandavas. They said, "We wish to know this. Which one among these is Yudhishthira? Where are Bhima, Arjuna and the illustrious Droupadi?" The suta recounted all their names. Sanjaya also introduced them to Droupadi and all the other Kuru women. "This one is fair, with a complexion that is like that of pure gold. His body is like that of a grown and large lion. His nose is sharp and his eyes are long and large. His complexion is coppery. This is the king of the Kurus. This one's gait is like of a mad king among elephants. He is fair and his complexion is like that of pure and heated gold. He is large and his arms are long and thick. Look. This is Vrikodara. Behold him. Next to him, there is the one with the large bow. He is young and dark, with a complexion like that of the leader of a herd of elephants. His shoulders are like that of a lion and his gait is like that of an elephant that is sporting. His eyes are like lotus petals. This is the brave Arjuna. The supreme men who are near Kunti are the twins, equal to Vishnu and the great Indra. Among all the men in this world, there is no one who is their equal in beauty, strength or good conduct. This one has eyes like lotus petals. She is middle-aged and is like one from heaven. Her complexion is like that of a blue lotus. This is Krishna, like Lakshmi personified, like the deity of a city. Next to her there is one with a golden complexion. Her complexion is like that of Gouri[87] personified. O foremost among brahmanas! This unmatched one in the middle is the sister of the one who has the chakra as a weapon.[88] There was a prosperous king who was the leader of an army. That king always challenged Krishna and this one, with a complexion like that of a blue lotus, is his sister.[89] This is the one who is Vrikodara's chief wife. This is the daughter of the famous king of Magadha, Jarasandha. Her complexion is like that of a *champaka* flower and she is the wife of Madravati's younger son.[90] This one has a body that is like a blue lotus and there is no one who is her equal on earth. Her eyes are like lotus petals and she is the wife of Madravati's older son.[91] This fair one has a complexion like that of heated gold. She is the daughter of King Virata and this is her son.[92] She is the wife of Abhimanyu, the one who was slain in the battle when he was without a chariot, though Drona and the others were on their chariots. These ones are attired in white upper garments and do not have the partings in their hair.[93] They are the wives of the king of men.[94] They are also the daughters-in-law of the aged king, who lost one hundred of his brave sons. They are thus without protectors. O brahmanas! O upright ones! O those who are spirited and intelligent! I have recounted the names of the foremost ones. These are the ones you have asked me about. O ones who are pure in intelligence! These are the wives of lords of men." The aged king of the Kurus was like a god among men and he thus met his sons. When all the ascetics had gone, he asked all of them about their welfare.

The warriors seated themselves around the hermitage, in a clear area that was free of fallen leaves. As is proper, the women, the aged and the young seated themselves and he asked them about their welfare.'

## Chapter 1964(33)

'Dhritarashtra asked, "O Yudhishthira! O mighty-armed one! O son! Are you well? What about your sons and all the residents of the city and the countryside? What about those who depend on you? Are they well? O lord! What about your advisers, large number of servants and seniors? Are the citizens served by the rajarshi so that they can obtain their subsistence? Is the treasury filled through revenue that does not violate any norms? Do you behave in the proper way towards enemies, neutrals and friends? Do you look after brahmanas properly and show them favours? O bull among the Bharata lineage! Are they satisfied with your good conduct? What about enemies, seniors, citizens, servants and relatives? O Indra among kings! Are you devoted towards ancestors and gods? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Do you worship guests with food and drink? Are the brahmanas in your dominion engaged in their own tasks? What about kshatriyas, large numbers of vaishyas, shudras and householders? Do the women, the young and the aged have to grieve or beg for anything? O bull among men! Are women honoured in your household? This lineage of rajarshis has obtained you as a king. O great king! I hope you are acting in the proper way and its fame is not diminishing."'

Vaishampayana said, 'Having been thus addressed, he[95] replied in the proper way. Those questions were about his welfare and deeds and he also asked questions about welfare. "O king! Are your austerities prospering? I hope exhaustion is not slowing you down. Without getting tired, is my mother able to serve you? O king! I hope her sojourn in the forest becomes successful. This is my elder mother[96] and she is afflicted and worn out through excessive exposure to the wind. She has been engaged in fierce austerities. I hope the queen is not suffering on account of this. Her immensely valorous sons have followed the dharma of kshatriyas and have been slain. I hope she does not censure us or regard us as sinners. O king! How is Vidura? We do not see him here. Is Sanjaya well and is he established in austerities?"

'Thus addressed, King Dhritarashtra replied. "O son! Vidura is well. He has resorted to fierce austerities. He does not eat anything and subsists only on air. He is emaciated and consists only of veins. Sometimes, brahmanas catch sight of him, alone in this forest." While he was speaking in this way, Kshatta was seen from a distance. His hair was matted and there were small pieces of wood in his mouth. He was emaciated and naked. He was covered in filth and smeared with pollen from wild flowers. The lord of the earth called out to him. However, on seeing such a large number of people in the hermitage, he suddenly began to run away. Alone, King Yudhishthira followed him. He entered that terrible forest, sometimes seeing him and sometimes unable to see him. The king pursued him carefully and called out, "Listen. O Vidura! I am your beloved King Yudhishthira." Vidura, supreme among intelligent ones, entered another solitary part of the forest and stood there alone, clinging to a tree. The king saw that he was extremely emaciated and his form alone could be discerned. That is the

way the immensely intelligent Yudhishthira could make out the immensely wise one. Standing before him, he said, “I am Yudhishthira.” The king said this in Vidura’s hearing and he received them only with his consciousness. He glanced at the king with unblinking eyes. Vidura fixed his gaze on his eyes. The intelligent Vidura penetrated his body with his body, his breath of life with his breath of life and his senses with his senses. Thus, using the strength of yoga, he entered the king’s body. Vidura ignited Dharmaraja’s energy. Vidura’s body still remained there, with unmoving eyes and clinging to the tree. The king saw that he had lost his senses. But he also realized that his many qualities had become more powerful. Pandava Dharmaraja remembered his own great energy.[97] O lord of the earth! He thus got to know everything about his earlier self. Vyasa had told him about the great energy that comes from the dharma of yoga. The learned Dharmaraja wished to perform the rites and perform the acts of cremation there. But an invisible voice was heard. “O king! What was known as Vidura should not be cremated. Your body is also in him and he is nothing but eternal Dharma. O king! He will obtain the worlds known as Santanaka.[98] O scorcher of enemies! He followed the dharma of mendicants and you should not grieve about him.” Having been thus addressed, Dharmaraja returned from that spot. He told the king who was Vichitravirya’s son everything that had happened. The radiant king, all the people and Bhimasena and the others were filled with great wonder. Hearing this, the king was delighted and spoke to Dharma’s son. “Accept this water, roots and fruits from me. O king! It has been said that a guest should be offered whatever one partakes oneself.” The king who was Dharma’s son agreed to this. They ate under trees. All of them accepted the fruits, the roots and the water. They spent the night under trees.’

## Chapter 1965(34)

Vaishampayana said, ‘The night was spent in that hermitage, performing auspicious deeds. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The conjunction of the nakshatras was auspicious and the night passed. Here and there, there were conversations, with the attributes of dharma and artha. There were citations from many sacred texts, with colourful words and syllables. O lord among men! Having cast aside their extremely expensive beds, the Pandavas slept on the ground, near their mother. Whatever the great-minded King Dhritarashtra ate, that is what those brave ones among men ate, spending the night there. When night was over, with his brothers, Kounteya performed the morning ablutions and took a look at the area around the hermitage. With Dhritarashtra’s permission, he roamed around wherever he wished, with the women from the inner quarters, the servants and the priests. He saw the sacrificial altars, with fires blazing. Many sages had consecrated themselves there and were offering oblations into the fires. There were wild flowers from the region and the smoke rose upwards. There were handsome brahmanas and large numbers of sages. There were herds of deer there and these were completely at ease. O lords! Large numbers of birds were without any fear and were singing. There were peacocks, blue jays, warbling gallinules and melodious cuckoos. These auspicious notes were pleasant to hear. Some places echoed with the sounds of brahmanas studying. In other spots, there were huge piles of fruits and roots that had been gathered. The king gave the ascetics riches, golden and silver pots and the wood of fig trees. The king gave them hides, woolen

cloth, ladles and spoons. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The king also gave them water pots, plates, pots for boiling, iron containers and many other kinds of vessels. Everyone accepted as much as he desired. The king, with dharma in his soul, toured the entire area of the hermitage. Having given away many kinds of riches to everyone, the king returned again.

'He went and met the learned King Dhritarashtra, who had performed his ablutions and was seated at ease, together with Gandhari. His mother stood not very far away, bowing down like a disciple. The one with dharma in his soul saw Kunti, who had always followed dharma. He worshipped the king and announced himself to the king. Having been asked to sit, he then seated himself on a mat made out of grass. Bhimasena and the other Pandavas, bulls among the Kouravas, also honoured the king and commanded by him, sat down. Surrounded by them, the Kourava king was radiant. He blazed in the prosperity of the brahman, like Brihaspati amidst the gods. When they were seated, the maharshis approached. There were also Shatayupa and the others, the residents of Kurukshetra. The illustrious and extremely energetic brahmana, Vyasa, worshipped by large numbers of devarshis and surrounded by his disciples, showed himself before the king. King Kouravya, Kunti's valiant son, and Bhimasena and the others arose and worshipped him. Vyasa, surrounded by Shatayupa and the others, approached and addressed King Dhritarashtra. There was an extensive mat made out of kusha grass and it was covered with black antelope skin and kusha grass on top. This had been prepared for Vyasa and it was offered to him. When he was seated, they took Dvaipayana's permission and seated themselves on mats around the immensely energetic one.'

## Chapter 1966(35)

Vaishampayana said, 'When the great-souled Pandavas were seated, Satyavati's son, Vyasa, invited the king to speak. "O Dhritarashtra! O mighty-armed one! Are your austerities progressing? O lord of men! Is your mind pleased with residing in the forest? O king! Has the sorrow on account of the destruction of your sons diminished? O unblemished one! Are all your senses of knowledge clear? Is your intelligence firmly fixed on observing the rites of the forest? I hope my daughter-in-law, Gandhari, is not overcome by grief. The queen is immensely wise and intelligent and has knowledge of dharma and artha. She knows the truth about prosperity and adversity. I hope she is not sorrowing. O king! I hope Kunti is serving you without any sense of ego. She has given up the kingdom and devoted herself to serving her seniors. Did the king who is Dharma's son, Bhima, Arjuna and the twins greet you happily? Have they been comforted? Were you happy at seeing them? Has your mind been cleansed of sin? O lord of men! Do you possess pure sentiments and has knowledge been generated in you? O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O great king! In all creatures, there are three things that are superior—lack of enmity, truth and lack of violence. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I hope you are not suffering from residing in the forest. O lord! What about eating forest fare and wearing the garments of sages? O king! I know about the departure, following the proper rites, of the great-souled Vidura. He was born from Dharma and was extremely great-souled. It was because of Mandavya's curse that Dharma was born as Vidura.[99] He was immensely intelligent. He was a great yogi. He was great-souled and extremely great-minded. Brihaspati among

the gods and Sukra among the asuras did not possess as much of intelligence as that bull among men did. Over a long period of time, the rishi Mandavya accumulated the strength of his austerities and used this to overwhelm eternal Dharma. Through his strength, Brahma's command and my employment, that extremely intelligent one was born in Vichitravirya's field.[100] O great king! He was your brother. But he was also the eternal god of the gods. Through the techniques of dharana and dhyana, the wise and the learned known him now as Dharma. The eternal one prospers through truth, self-control, rituals, non-violence, generosity and austerities. Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, was born through the strength of his yoga. O king! That is the reason that wise and extremely intelligent one is also known as Dharma. Both here and in the hereafter, Dharma exists, like the fire, like the wind, like the water, like the earth and like the sky. O Kouravya! He can go everywhere. He pervades everything, mobile and immobile. That god of the gods can be seen by the siddhas, those who have cleansed their sins. Dharma is Vidura. Vidura is the Pandava.[101] O king! You can see Pandava, who is standing before you and is obedient to you. Your brother, the supremely intelligent one, has entered him with his soul. It is good fortune that the great-souled one, immensely strong in yoga, now pervades Kounteya. O bull among the Bharata lineage! You will also be united with the greatest benefit. O son! Know that I have come here to dispel your doubts. There is a deed that none of the maharshis in this world have ever accomplished earlier. It is marvelous. Through the fruits of my austerities, I will show it to you. O lord of the earth! What do you desire? What do you seek to obtain from me? Tell me clearly what you wish to see or hear. I will act in accordance with that."'

*This ends Ashrama-Vasa Parva.*



# Section Ninety-One
# *Putra Darshana Parva*

*This section has 234 shlokas and 9 chapters.*

*Chapter 1967(36): 33 shlokas*
*Chapter 1968(37): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1969(38): 23 shlokas*
*Chapter 1970(39): 24 shlokas*
*Chapter 1971(40): 21 shlokas*
*Chapter 1972(41): 28 shlokas*
*Chapter 1973(42): 17 shlokas*
*Chapter 1974(43): 18 shlokas*
*Chapter 1975(44): 52 shlokas*

*Putra means son and* darshana *means sight. Vyasa uses the power of his austerities to show everyone the dead warriors, including the sons of Dhritarashtra and Gandhari. That explains the name of this parva. After visiting Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Kunti, the Pandavas return to Hastinapura.*

# Chapter 1967(36)

Janamejaya asked, ‘O brahmana! King Dhritarashtra, tiger among men, went to the forest with his wife and his daughter-in-law, Kunti. Vidura obtained success and merged himself into Dharmaraja. All the sons of Pandu were then residing in the circle of the hermitage. What wonderful deed did the supremely energetic maharshi, Vyasa, accomplish? What did he speak of doing? O brahmana! For how long did the undecaying Kouravya king, Yudhishthira, reside in the forest with his people? O lord! While he dwelt there, what did he and his soldiers eat? What about the great-souled ones and the women of the inner quarters? O unblemished one! Tell me that.’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘O king! With the permission of the king of the Kurus, the Pandavas prepared many kinds of food and drink and felt refreshed. With the soldiers and the women of the inner quarters, they resided there for one month. O unblemished one! After this, as I have told you, Vyasa arrived there. In the presence of the king, all of them began to converse. O king! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! When Vyasa had come, other sages also arrived there—Narada, Parvata, Devala, great in austerities, Vishvavasu, Tumbaru and Chitrasena.[1] With Dhritarashtra’s permission, Yudhishthira, the great-minded king of the Kurus, followed the proper rites and worshipped them. Having been worshipped by Yudhishthira, all of them sat down on sacred and excellent seats covered with grass. When they were seated, the immensely intelligent king who was the extender of the Kuru lineage[2] also sat down, surrounded by the sons of Pandu. Gandhari, Kunti, Droupadi, Satvati[3] and the other women also seated themselves. O king! The conversation that ensued was divine, full of dharma and concerned accounts of the ancient rishis, the gods and the asuras.

‘When this conversation was over, Vyasa, foremost among eloquent ones and supreme among those who knew about all Vedas, was pleased. The immensely energetic one again spoke these words to the lord whose sight was his wisdom. “O Indra among kings! I know the desire that is there in your heart. You are burning with grief on account of your sons. O king! That grief is also there in Gandhari’s heart. O great king! It is also there in the hearts of Kunti and Droupadi. Subhadra, Krishna’s sister, is also holding up a fierce sorrow on account of her son being killed. That is also known to me. O king! I heard that all of them had come here and were residing here. O descendant of the Kourava lineage! I have accordingly come here to dispel doubts. Over a long period of time, I have accumulated the valour of austerities. All of these gods, gandharvas and maharshis will witness that today. Therefore, tell me. O mighty-armed one! I will grant you whatever you wish. I am lofty and can grant you a boon. Behold the strength of my austerities.” The Indra among kings was thus addressed by the infinitely intelligent Vyasa. He thought for a short while and then spoke. “I am blessed that you are showing me your favours. Since you have come here today, with all these virtuous ones, my life has become successful. Today, I understand the destinations obtained by great-souled ones. All of you are Brahma’s equal. You are stores of austerities and have come here to meet me. There is no doubt that I have become purified through the act of seeing you. O unblemished ones! I no longer entertain any fears about the world hereafter. However, I loved my son and always remember him. My mind is distressed. He was evil-minded and extremely wicked. What has happened

to him? He was evil in his intelligence and oppressed the innocent Pandavas. He violently destroyed the earth, with its men and elephants. There were great-souled kings, the lords of many countries. They assembled for my son's sake and all of them came under the subjugation of death. Those brave ones gave up their sons and wives, dearer to them than their own lives. They went to the abode of the lord of the dead. What has happened to them? O brahmana! What has happened to those who were slain in the battle for the sake of their friends? What about my sons and grandsons who were killed in the encounter? My heart is pained at the immensely strong and aged Bhishma, Shantanu's son, being brought down, as it is for Drona, supreme among brahmanas. My son was foolish and wicked. He hated his well-wishers. Desiring the kingdom of the earth, he conveyed his blazing lineage to its destruction. I remember all this and am burnt night and day. Overwhelmed by sorrow and grief, I cannot obtain any peace. O father! This is what I think about. There is no tranquility for me."'

## Chapter 1968(37)

Vaishampayana said, 'O Janamejaya! Hearing these piteous words of the rajarshi, Gandhari began to sorrow again. So did Kunti, Drupada's daughter, Subhadra and the excellent women and daughters-in-law of the Kourava lineage. Queen Gandhari was overwhelmed with grief. Her eyes were bound. Joining her hands in salutation, she spoke to her father-in-law. "O bull among sages! Sixteen years have elapsed since this king's sons were slain. O lord! He sorrows over his sons and can find no peace. Overcome with grief on account of his sons, the lord of the earth sighs. O great sage! Dhritarashtra has never been able to sleep or sit. Through the strength of your austerities, you are capable of creating all the worlds. Why can you not show the king the worlds to which his sons have gone? Krishna Droupadi sorrows grievously because her relatives and sons have been slain. She is virtuous and you love this daughter-in-law the most among all your daughters-in-law. Krishna's sister, Subhadra, is gentle in speech. The beautiful one sorrows grievously because Subhadra's son was killed. This is the wife of Bhurishrava and she is extremely miserable. O lord! Because of the grief at the hardship her husband confronted, she cannot lie down or sit. Her father-in-law was the intelligent Bahlika, the extender of the Kuru lineage. With his father, Somadatta was slain in the great battle.[4] O immensely intelligent one! Your son had one hundred handsome sons who did not retreat from battle. They were slain in the forefront of the battle. These are those one hundred wives, also grieving on account of their sons. The king and I think repeatedly about this and sorrow. O great sage! They surround me in their sorrow. Those were brave and great-souled maharathas, my fathers-in-law, Somadatta and the others. O lord! What has happened to them? O illustrious one! Through your favours, the king's sorrow can be banished. The time is right for this to be done for me too, and for Kunti, your daughter-in-law." Kunti's face was emaciated because of her vows. When Gandhari had spoken, she remembered her son, who had been secretly born from the sun god. Rishi Vyasa was the granter of boons and could hear and see from a distance. He saw that the queen, Savyasachi's mother, was miserable. Vyasa told her, "O immensely wise one! Tell me what you wish to be done. What is in your mind?" Kunti bowed her head down before her father-in-law. In shame, she told him these words, explaining what had happened earlier.'

## Chapter 1969(38)

‘Kunti said, “O illustrious one! You are my father-in-law. Therefore, you are like a god of the gods to me. Since you are like a god of the gods, listen to my truthful words. An ascetic and wrathful brahmana named Durvasa came to my father, soliciting alms. I gratified him by offering him food and through my purity, renunciation and cleanliness of mind. Even when there was reason for great anger, I did not exhibit any rage. He was pleased with me and said that he would grant me a boon. ‘You must accept a boon.’ That is what he told me. I was scared of being cursed by the brahmana and agreed. The brahmana spoke to me again. ‘O fortunate one! O one with the beautiful face! You will be Dharma’s mother. Whichever god you desire will obey your summons and present himself.’ Having said this, the brahmana disappeared and I was astounded. But in no situation, did it disappear from my mind.[5] Once I was seated in a floor of the palace and saw the rising sun. I remembered the rishi’s words and remembered the sun god. I was still a child and did not comprehend the sin associated with this. The god, the one with the one thousand rays, appeared before me. He divided his body into two parts, one for the sky and one for earth. One of these continued to heat the worlds and the other presented itself before me. I was trembling and he said, ‘Accept a boon from me.’ I bowed my head down before him and replied, ‘Please go.’ The one with the fierce rays told me, ‘A summons cannot be futile and I will not pardon you. I will burn down the brahmana who gave you the boon and will also burn you down.’ I wished to protect the brahmana. He had not committed any crime that deserved a curse. So I told him, ‘O god! Give me a son who will be like you.’ At this, the sun god penetrated me with his energy and confounded me. He told me that I would have a son and returned to the firmament. I was in the inner quarters and wished to hide what had happened from my father. The son, Karna, was secretly born and I cast the child into the waters. O brahmana! There is no doubt that through the god’s favours, I once again became a virgin, just as the rishi had said I would. I was foolish. Though I knew him as my son, I ignored him. O brahmana rishi! This continues to consume me and you know it well. Whether this was a sin, or whether it was not a sin, I have now told you about it. O illustrious one! You should free me from the fear that I suffer from.[6] O unblemished one! Let the king also know what is in his heart. O supreme among sages! Through you, those wishes can be satisfied.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Having been addressed thus, Vyasa, supreme among those who knew about the Vedas, said, “You are praiseworthy. Everything will happen exactly as you have told me. There was no crime attached to you. You became a virgin again. The gods possess the power to enter human bodies. Since they are gods, they can have offspring through resolution, words, sight, touch and intercourse. These are the five methods they use. The dharma of humans must not be confused with the dharma of gods. O Kunti! Now that you know this, let your mental fever be extinguished. For all those who are strong, there is medication. For all those who are strong, there is purification. For all those who are strong, there is dharma. For all those who are strong, everything can be owned.”’

## Chapter 1970(39)

‘Vyasa said, “O fortunate one! O Gandhari! You will see your sons, brothers, friends and the husbands of these daughters-in-law. They will seem to have woken up from sleep. Kunti will see Karna and Yadavi will see Subhadra’s son. Droupadi will see her five sons and her father and brothers. In my heart, I had thought of this means, even before you, the king and Pritha urged me. You should not grieve for all those great-souled bulls among men. They were virtuous and resorted to the dharma of kshatriyas. That is how they were slain. O unblemished one! This was certainly destiny, to accomplish the tasks of the gods. All of them were born on earth as incarnations, as parts of the gods. There were also gandharvas, apsaras, pishachas, guhyakas, rakshasas and other sacred ones, the siddhas and the devarshis. There were also gods, danavas and unblemished brahmana rishis. In the forefront of the battle, those were the ones who were slain in Kurukshetra. It has been heard that Dhritarashtra was an intelligent king of the gandharvas. He was born in the world of humans as Dhritarashtra, your husband. Know that the undecaying Pandu was a superior one from the large number of Maruts. Kshatta and King Yudhishthira were born as parts of Dharma. Know Duryodhana to be Kali and Shakuni to be Dvapara. O one who is beautiful to see! Know that Duhshasana and the others were rakshasas. Know that Bhimasena, the powerful scorcher of enemies, came from the Maruts and Partha Dhananjaya was the rishi Nara. Hrishikesha was Narayana and the twins are the Ashvins. O beautiful one! Know that Aditya, supreme among those who heat, divided himself into two parts, one for heating the worlds and the other as Karna. Since the objective was to foster enmity, he was generated through this friction. Subhadra’s son was the heir of the Pandavas. He was slain by the six maharathas. He was born from the god Soma, who used yoga to divide himself into two. With Droupadi, Dhrishtadyumna was born from the fire, as parts of the auspicious fire god. Know that Shikhandi was a rakshasa. Know that Drona was a part of Brihaspati and Drona’s son of Rudra. Know that Gangeya Bhishma was a Vasu born as a human. O immensely wise one! In this way, the gods were born as humans. O beautiful one! Having accomplished their tasks, they have returned to heaven again. All of you have borne sorrow in your hearts for a long time, resulting from a fear about what has happened in the world hereafter. I will dispel that now. All of you should proceed towards the river Bhagirathi. There, you will see all those who have been slain in the field of battle.”’

Vaishampayana continued, ‘Hearing Vyasa’s words, all the people roared loudly, like lions, and proceeded towards the Ganga. Dhritarashtra and his advisers proceeded with the Pandavas, together with the tigers among sages and gandharvas who had assembled. That ocean of people gradually reached the Ganga. Cheerfully, as they wished, all of them began to dwell there. The intelligent Pandava resided in a spot there, with his followers, with the women from the inner quarters and the aged. They spent that day, as if it was one hundred years. They waited for the night, desiring to see the slain kings. The sun set over the sacred Asta mountain.[7] They bathed and completed the evening rites.’

## Chapter 1971(40)

Vaishampayana said, ‘When night approached, they performed their evening ablutions. All those who had assembled approached Vyasa. Dhritarashtra, with dharma in his soul, purified his mind. He seated himself, with the Pandavas and the rishis. The women seated themselves with Gandhari.

According to age, all the people, the residents of the city and the countryside, also sat down. Vyasa, the immensely energetic and great sage, bathed in the sacred waters of the Bhagirathi and summoned all the people[8]—all the warriors who had fought for the Pandavas and the Kouravas and the immensely fortunate kings who had resided in different countries. O Janamejaya! A tumultuous sound arose from inside the water, raised by those who had earlier been Kuru and Pandava soldiers. All the kings, with Bhishma and Drona leading the way, and all the soldiers arose from the water in their thousands. Virata and Drupada were there, with their sons and their soldiers. Droupadi's sons, Subhadra's son and the rakshasa Ghatotkacha were also there. There were Karna and Duryodhana, maharatha Shakuni, Duhshasana and the other maharatha sons of Dhritarashtra. There were Jarasandha's son, Bhagadatta, King Jalasandha, Bhurishrava, Shala, Shalya, Vrishasena and his younger brother, Prince Lakshmana, Dhrishtadyumna and his son, all of Shikhandi's sons, Dhrishtaketu and his younger brother, Achala, Vrishaka, the rakshasa Alayudha, Bahlika, Somadatta and King Chekitana. There were many others, several whom I have not mentioned now. With shining bodies, all of them arose from the water. The brave kings were seen to arise with the garments, standards and mounts that they had possessed. All of them were attired in celestial garments. All of them were adorned in dazzling earrings. They were beyond enmity, beyond ego, beyond rage and beyond intolerance. Gandharvas sang around them and bards chanted their praises. They sported divine garments and garlands and were surrounded by large numbers of apsaras. O lord of men! The sage who was Satyavati's son was delighted. Through the strength of his austerities, he gave Dhritarashtra divine eyesight. The illustrious Gandhari also had the strength of this divine knowledge. She saw all her sons and all the others who had been slain in the battle. All the people watched with unblinking eyes. They thought that this was an extremely great wonder and it made their body hair stand up. The large numbers of cheerful men and women made it seem like a festival. They saw the soldiers who had arrived, as if they had been etched on a painting. With his divine sight, Dhritarashtra saw all of them. O best among the Bharata lineage! Through the sage's favours, he was delighted.'

## Chapter 1972(41)

Vaishampayana said, 'The best among the Bharata lineage met each other. They were devoid of anger and jealousy. All of them had cleansed their sins. They resorted to the sacred rites that had been laid down by the brahmana rishis. All of them were cheerful in their minds, like immortals in the world of the gods. O king! Sons met fathers and mothers, wives met husbands, brothers met brothers and friends met friends. Happily, the Pandavas met the great archer, Karna, Subhadra's son and all of Droupadi's sons. Karna and the Pandavas were delighted to meet each other. All the kings met each other affectionately. Through the favours of the rishi, all rage in the other kshatriyas was destroyed. They abandoned enmity and resorted to affection. In this way, all of them, the tigers among the Kurus and the other men, met their seniors and their relatives and sons. Cheerful in their minds, they passed that entire night. The kings were content and thought that they were in heaven. There was no sorrow, no fear, no terror, no desire and no fame. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The warriors met each other. Having met their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons, the women obtained great happiness and

abandoned all their grief. The brave ones and their wives spent a night of pleasure together. They embraced each other and then returned to wherever they had come from. The bull among sages gave those people leave to depart. While everyone looked on, they disappeared in an instant.[9] The great-souled ones were submerged in the sacred river that has three flows. With their chariots and their standards, they returned to their own abodes. Some went to the world of the gods, others to Brahma's abode. Some went to Varuna's world, others obtained Kubera's abode. Some of those kings obtained the world of Vaivasvata. Some went to the worlds of the rakshasas and pishachas, others to Uttara Kuru. The progress of all of them was wonderful, as some went with the immortals. The great-souled ones left with their mounts and their followers.

'The great sage was still standing in the water. He was devoted to dharma and immensely energetic, engaged in the welfare of the Kurus. When all of them had gone, he spoke to the kshatriya ladies who had lost their husbands. "Let the best among women who desire the worlds obtained by their husbands swiftly and faithfully immerse themselves in the waters of the Jahnavi." Hearing those words, those beautiful women behaved faithfully. Obeying their father-in-law, they entered the waters of the Jahnavi. O lord of the earth! All those virtuous women were freed from their human bodies and departed with their husbands. In this way, all those virtuous women of the lineage entered the water, were freed and went to the worlds obtained by their husbands. They had divine forms. They were adorned in divine ornaments. There were divine garments and garlands. They went where their husbands were. They were spirited and possessed good conduct. All of them possessed all the good qualities. Freed from sin, they vanished and obtained their own respective abodes. Vyasa was the granter of boons and devoted to dharma. At that time, he satisfied the wishes of everyone.[10] There were people who had assembled from many countries. On hearing of this encounter between those gods among men and the men who had returned, they were greatly delighted. A man who listens to this account of the encounter between those who loved each other, always obtains good things, in this world and in the next. He obtains benefits and is united with his relatives. His mind is at ease. A learned man who makes others listen to this obtains supreme success. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Men who observe rites and study this are united with the yoga of adhyatma and become intelligent men. Those who hear this parva recited always obtain supreme success.'

## Chapter 1973(42)

'Suta[11] said, "On hearing of the reappearance and departure of his forefathers, the learned King Janamejaya was delighted. Filled with joy, he again asked about the reappearance. 'If one has cast aside the body, how can one be again seen in that same form?' The best among brahmanas, Vyasa's powerful disciple was addressed in this way and replied. 'It is certain that the results of all deeds are never destroyed. O king! Bodies and forms are the outcome of deeds. The great elements are united with the lord of all elements and are permanent. They always exist with the eternal and are not destroyed when they are separated from the impermanent. The efforts of acts done easily bring fruits. However, if the atman is attached to the acts, one enjoys happiness and unhappiness.[12] It has been determined that the kshetrajna is never destroyed. Know that the atman in creatures is permanent.

One's own form exists as long as deeds have not been exhausted. Until the deeds are exhausted, a man is constrained by his own form. There are many attributes that come together and lead to the body. Those who know can distinguish these from the eternal. In a horse sacrifice, the sacred texts have spoken about what is meant by a horse. Even when the horse goes to another world, the breath of life is eternal and in that sense, the horse is eternal. O king! If it pleases you, I will tell you what is beneficial for you. When engaged in sacrifices, you have heard of the path of devayana. When good deeds are performed for a sacrifice, the gods are favourably inclined towards you. When gods are honoured through animals, they become lords of the passage. Though they are seen to have gone, there are other parts that are permanent.[13] A man who sees this union of the five elements and various categories as permanent and confuses it with the eternal atman is futile in his intelligence. A person who sorrows because of separation is foolish. That is my view. A person who connects separation with taints should avoid all forms of association. If there is no attachment, there is no association. In this world, misery results from separation. A man who distinguishes the temporary from the permanent is not agitated by a sense of ego. A person who is touched by intelligence and can separate the temporary from the permanent is freed from confusion. Creatures arrive from a state of being invisible and return to being invisible again. I do not know him. He does not know me. Nor do I yet know detachment. If a man does not have control over his mind, whatever be the form of the body in which he undertakes acts, that is the form of the body in which he has to enjoy the fruits. Deeds of the mind are enjoyed in the mind. Deeds of the body are enjoyed in the body."'

## Chapter 1974(43)

Vaishampayana said, 'O extender of the Kuru lineage! Through the favours of the rishi, the king obtained sight and saw his sons in their own forms, having never been able to see them earlier.[14] The king knew about the dharma of kings, the brahman and the Upanishads.[15] The best among men possessed the determination of intelligence. Through the strength of his austerities, the immensely wise Vidura advanced towards success. Having met the ascetic Vyasa, so did Dhritarashtra.'

Janamejaya said, 'If Vyasa, the granter of boons, shows me my father in his former form, his former garments and his former age, I will then have faith in all this. Such a sight will be agreeable. I will then have accomplished success. I will be firm in my determination. Through the favours of that son of a rishi, let my desire be accomplished.

'Suta said, "When the king spoke these words, the powerful and intelligent Vyasa wished to show him his favours and brought Parikshit there. King Janamejaya saw his handsome father. The king arrived from heaven in his former form and his former age. The great-souled Shamika and his son Shringi and the advisers also arrived and the king saw them.[16] Having performed the final rites of the sacrifice, King Janamejaya was delighted. The king bathed and also bathed his father himself. Having bathed, the best among the Bharata lineage addressed Astika, who was Jaratkaru's son and was born in a lineage of nomadic mendicants. 'O Astika! This sacrifice of mine has witnessed various wonders. That is my view. I have even obtained my father, the dispeller of my sorrows, now.'

‘“Astika replied, ‘Rishi Dvaipayana is an ancient store of austerities. O best among those of the Kuru lineage! If he is present at any person’s sacrifice, that person conquers both the worlds. O descendant of the Pandava lineage! You have heard many colourful accounts. The snakes have been reduced to ashes and have followed the footsteps of your father. O king! Because of your devotion to the truth, Takshaka has also been freed. All the rishis have been worshipped and you have seen the great-souled one’s end.[17] On hearing about this destruction of sin, you have accumulated a great deal of dharma. On seeing this generous person,[18] the strands of your heart have been loosened. There are those who are on the side of dharma, with good deeds and inclinations. On seeing them, sins are diminished. One should bow down before such people.’”

‘Suta continued, “King Janamejaya heard this from the best among brahmanas. He worshipped the rishi and honoured him repeatedly. O one who knows about dharma! He then asked the undecaying and excellent rishi Vaishampayana about the remaining part of the account about residence in the forest.”’

## Chapter 1975(44)

Janamejaya asked, ‘The king saw his sons and grandsons, with their friends and followers. After this, what did Dhritarashtra and King Yudhishthira do?’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘Being able to see his sons again was a great and extraordinary wonder. After having seen this, the rajarshi was freed from his grief and returned to his hermitage. Taking Dhritarashtra’s permission, all the ordinary people and the supreme rishis went away, as they desired. The great-souled Pandavas, with the superior and the inferior soldiers, followed the great-souled king and his wife. The intelligent sage who was Satyavati’s son, worshipped by brahmana rishis and the worlds, also went to the hermitage and addressed Dhritarashtra. “O Dhritarashtra! O mighty-armed one! O descendant of the Kourava lineage! Listen. You have obtained knowledge from the ancient rishis, the performers of auspicious deeds. They are senior, prosperous in knowledge and born in noble lineages. They know about the Vedas and the Vedangas. They know about dharma and about the ancient texts. They have told you about various accounts. Do not have any sorrow in your mind. A learned person is not distressed because of ill fortune. You have also heard about the secrets of the gods from Narada, who knows about what the gods intend. Your sons died after following the dharma of kshatriyas. They were sanctified by weapons and obtained an auspicious end. You have seen your sons, happily roaming around as they will. With all his brothers, their wives and well-wishers, the intelligent Yudhishthira is awaiting your instructions. Let him go, so that he can rule his own kingdom. He has dwelt in this forest for more than a month. O scorcher of enemies! The kingdom must always be protected carefully. O lord of men! There are many who hope to seize the kingdom.” The extremely intelligent Vyasa addressed the Kourava king in this way.

‘Hence, the eloquent one summoned Yudhishthira and spoke these words. “O Ajatashatru! O fortunate one! With your brothers, listen to me. O lord of the earth! Through your favours, grief does not constrain me any longer. O son! I am happy, just as I used to be with you earlier in Gajasahvya. O learned one! With you as my protector, I am surrounded by everything agreeable. I have obtained the

fruits of obtaining a son through you. I am extremely happy with you. O mighty-armed one! I no longer suffer from rancour. O son! Leave quickly. Since I have met you, my austerities have suffered. My body has suffered from austerities. But on meeting you, I am able to hold it up again. Like me, your mothers[19] are also emaciated at having subsisted only on leaves. They are engaged in vows like mine. O son! They will not live for a long time. We have seen Duryodhana and the others, who have gone to the other world. That became possible because of the valour of Vyasa's austerities and you coming here. O unblemished one! The purpose behind my long life has been met. You should grant me permission to engage in severe austerities. The ancestral rites and fame of the lineage are now vested in you. O mighty-armed one! O son! Today or tomorrow, without any delay, leave. O bull among the Bharata lineage! You have heard a lot about the policy to be followed by kings. O lord! I do not see what else I can instruct you. You are accomplished." O son! These are the words the king spoke to the king.[20] "O one who knows about dharma! You should not abandon me in this way. I do not deserve it. If they so wish, let all my brothers and followers leave. I will carefully serve you and the two mothers in the vows." Gandhari replied, "O son! It shouldn't be that way. Listen to my words. The Kuru lineage and the ancestral rites of your father-in-law vest with you. O son! You should depart. You have worshipped us enough. O son! The king has spoken to you about what you should do and you listen to your father's words." Thus addressed, he wiped his eyes, which were overflowing with tears of affection. Weeping, he spoke these words to Kunti. "The king has cast me away and so has the illustrious Gandhari. However, I have always been bound to you. How can I miserably go away? O one who follows dharma! But I do not also wish to be an impediment in the path of your austerities. There is nothing superior to austerities. Greatness is obtained through austerities. O queen! My mind no longer turns towards the kingdom, as it used to do in earlier times. My entire mind and soul are now attracted towards austerities. This entire world is now empty. O fortunate one! The relatives are fewer. Our forces are no longer as strong as they used to be. The Panchalas have been severely diminished and only the maidens remain. O fortunate one! I do not see anyone who can establish their lineage again. In the encounter, all of them have been reduced to ashes by Drona alone. Those who were left were slain by Drona's son in the night. We can see that the Chedis and the Matsyas are no longer what they used to be. The Vrishnis alone are left, protected by Vasudeva's chakra. But I also see that dharma and artha must be established. There is no other reason. Therefore, cast your auspicious glances on all of us. It will be extremely difficult for us to see you. O mother! The king will engage in fierce austerities." When he heard these words, the mighty-armed Sahadeva, the lord of any battle, spoke these words to Yudhishthira, tears flowing down from his eyes. "O bull among kings! I am not interested in leaving my mother. You should quickly go. But I will observe austerities in this forest. I will use austerities to dry up my body here. I will serve at the feet of the king and my mothers." When he spoke in this way, Kunti embraced the mighty-armed one in her arms and said, "O son! You should not speak in this way. Act in accordance with my words. May everything be auspicious and well with you. May my sons be well. If you remain here, our austerities will be obstructed. I am bound by the noose of affection to you and my supreme austerities will suffer. O son! Therefore, depart. That is best for you. O lord! There is little time left for us." O Indra among kings! In this way, through this and many other words spoken by Kunti, their minds were calmed, especially those of Sahadeva and the king.

‘The bulls among the Kuru lineage took permission from their mothers and from the king. They greeted the best among the Kuru lineage and the mothers and said, “O king! We will return. We have been honoured through these auspicious words. O king! With your permission, we will leave, cleansed of sin.” This is what the great-souled Dharmaraja said. The rajarshi granted him permission, honoured Yudhishthira and pronounced benedictions of victory over him. The king comforted Bhima, best among strong ones. The intelligent and valiant one honoured him back in return. Kouravya embraced Arjuna and the twins, bulls among men. He honoured them and granted them permission to leave. They grasped Gandhari’s feet and sought her permission. The king’s mother[21] inhaled the fragrance of his head and embraced him. All of them circumambulated her, like calves who were being separated.[22] As they circumambulated, they kept on glancing towards her repeatedly. So did the virtuous Droupadi and all the other Kourava women. They followed the prescribed conduct and took leave of their father-in-law. The unblemished ones took leave from their mothers-in-law and were embraced by them. Having been instructed about their duties, they left with their husbands. The charioteers shouted, “Yoke. Arrange for the yoking.” There was the grunting of camels and the neighing of horses. King Yudhishthira left for the city of Hastinapura, with his wives, soldiers and his relatives.’

*This ends Putra Darshana Parva.*



# Section Ninety-Two
# *Naradagamana Parva*

*This section has 91 shlokas and 3 chapters.*

*Chapter 1976(45): 44 shlokas*
*Chapter 1977(46): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1978(47): 27 shlokas*

Agamana *means arrival and this parva is about Narada's arrival. Narada arrives and tells the Pandavas that Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Kunti have been killed in a forest fire and Sanjaya has gone off to the Himalayas.*

# Chapter 1977(45)

Vaishampayana said, ‘O king! Two years passed since the return of the Pandavas. As he wished, devarshi Narada came to meet Yudhishthira. Mighty-armed Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, worshipped him. When he was seated and rested, the supreme among eloquent ones asked, “O illustrious one! It has been a long time since you last came. O brahmana! Since you have arrived, is everything well and auspicious? Which countries have you seen? What can I do for you? O foremost among brahmanas! Tell me that. You are our beloved guest.” Narada replied, “O king! I have not seen you for a long time and that is the reason I have come from my hermitage. O king! I have seen the tirthas and the Ganga.” Yudhishthira asked, “People who reside along the banks of the Ganga say that the great-souled Dhritarashtra is resorting to supreme austerities now. Have you seen if the extender of the Kuru lineage is well? What about Gandhari, Pritha and Sanjaya, the son of a suta? How is the king, my father, now? O illustrious one! If you have seen the king, I wish to hear about this.”

‘Narada replied, “O great king! Be calm and listen. I will tell you everything about what I heard and what I saw in that hermitage. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! O king! When you returned from residing in the forest, your father left Kurukshetra and left for Gangadvara.[1] The intelligent one went with Gandhari, the daughter-in-law, Kunti, the suta Sanjaya, the sacrificial fire and the officiating priests. Your father is a store of austerities and resorted to fierce austerities. He placed pebbles in his mouth. He subsisted only on air. He became like a sage. In that forest, the great ascetic was worshipped by all the sages. In six months, the king was reduced to skin and bones. Gandhari subsisted only on water. Kunti ate only once a month. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Sanjaya ate every sixth day. The lord and the officiating priests offered many kinds of oblations into the sacrificial fire. In that forest, the king was sometimes seen and sometimes not seen.[2] The king roamed around in that forest, without a fixed abode. He was followed by the two queens and by Sanjaya. Sanjaya guided the king over plain and uneven terrain. In a similar way, the unblemished Pritha became Gandhari’s eyes. Once, the supreme among kings went to a marshy tract near the Ganga. The intelligent one bathed in the Ganga and then headed for the hermitage. A wind arose and there was a large forest conflagration. In every direction, it grasped everything and burnt down the entire forest. In every direction, herds of deer and flocks of birds were burnt down. Herds of boar sought refuge in waterbodies. The forest thus confronted a great hardship. The king had not eaten. Because he was weak, he couldn’t move around. Your mothers were also extremely emaciated and incapable of moving. The king saw that the fire was approaching near. Therefore, the lord of the earth anxiously spoke these words to the suta, Sanjaya. ‘O Sanjaya! Go to a spot so that the fire does not burn you down. We will be burnt down by the fire and obtain the supreme objective.’ Sanjaya, supreme among eloquent ones, replied, ‘O king! This destruction and death from a fire is futile. However, I do not see any means of escaping from the fire. Therefore, you should tell me what needs to be done now.’ Thus addressed by Sanjaya, the king spoke again. ‘Since we have left our house ourselves, this death can cause us no harm. Water, fire, wind and emaciation of the body are praised for ascetics.[3] O Sanjaya! Leave without delay.’ Having told Sanjaya this, the king concentrated his mind. He sat down with

Gandhari and Kunti, facing an eastern direction. On seeing this, Sanjaya circumambulated them. The intelligent one replied, 'O lord! Focus yourself.' The king, the learned son of a rishi, acted in accordance with these words. He restrained all his senses and became like a piece of wood. So did the immensely fortunate Gandhari and your mother, Pritha. Your father, the king, was burnt down in the forest conflagration. But Sanjaya, the great adviser, escaped from the conflagration. I saw him on the banks of the Ganga, surrounded by ascetics. When I asked him, the energetic one told me everything. The suta, Sanjaya, next left for the Himalaya mountains. In this way, the great-minded king of the Kurus was killed. O lord of men! So were Gandhari and your mother, Pritha. O bull among the Bharata lineage! When I was wandering around as I wished, I saw the bodies of the king and the two queens. On hearing about the king, many ascetics assembled in that hermitage. He was devoted and you should not grieve about him. O supreme among men! O Pandava! That is where I heard everything about the king and the queens and about how they were burnt down. O Indra among kings! You should not grieve about this. The lord of the earth, Gandhari and your mother desired that death by the fire voluntarily."'

Vaishampayana said, 'On hearing this about Dhritarashtra's departure, all the Pandavas were overcome by great grief. O great king! On hearing that the king had obtained his end, great sounds of lamentation arose from the inner quarters and from the citizens. Extremely miserable, the king exclaimed, "Alas!" Remembering his mother, Yudhishthira raised his arms upwards and wept. So did all his brothers, with Bhimasena at the forefront. O great king! On hearing that Pritha had departed, great sounds of weeping arose from the inner quarters. All of them sorrowed over the aged king who had lost his sons and had now been burnt down and about the ascetic Gandhari. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! After some time, those sounds stopped. Controlling his tears through his fortitude, Dharmaraja spoke these words.'

## Chapter 1977(46)

'Yudhishthira said, "The great-souled one was engaged in fierce austerities. Though we, his relatives, are here, he died without a protector. Since Vichitravirya's son has been burnt down in a forest conflagration, it is my view that the fortune of men is extremely difficult to decipher. He had one hundred handsome sons, with strength in their arms. The king himself possessed the strength of ten thousand elephants. Yet, he has been burnt down in a forest conflagration. Earlier, the best of women used to fan him with fans made out of palm leaves. Since he has been consumed in a forest conflagration, vultures are fanning him now. Large numbers of bards and minstrels used to wake him from sleep earlier. Because of my wicked deeds, the king is lying down on the ground now. I am not grieving over the illustrious Gandhari, whose sons have been slain. Devoted to her husband's vows, she has got the world obtained by her husband. But I sorrow over Pritha. She abandoned the extremely great and blazing prosperity of her sons and chose to reside in the forest instead. Shame on our kingdom. Shame on our strength. Shame on our valour. Shame on the dharma of kshatriyas and on the fact that we are alive while she is dead. O supreme among the best of brahmanas! The progress of time is indeed exceedingly subtle, since she abandoned the kingdom and desired to reside in the

forest. She is the mother of Yudhishthira, Bhima and Vijaya. Without a protector, how could she have been burnt down? When I think of this, I am stupefied. Savyasachi pacified the fire god in Khandava and that was pointless.[4] It is my view that he[5] ignored that good deed and was ungrateful. The illustrious one burnt down Savyasachi's mother. He assumed the disguise of a brahmana and arrived, seeking alms. Shame on Agni. Shame on Partha's fame and unwavering aim. O illustrious one! There is something else that brings me greater grief. How could the lord of the earth suffer from a futile death from the fire? Rajarshi Kourava decided to become an ascetic. He ruled the earth. How can this kind of death be praised for him? In the great forest, there are also fires that have been sanctified by mantras. Since my father was so devoted, how could he have been consumed by a futile fire? Pritha was emaciated and reduced to veins alone. I think that in great fear, she must have trembled and shrieked, 'O son! O Dharmaraja! O Bhima! Save me from the fear that has surrounded me from all sides.' Anxious because of the fire, my mother must have run around in every direction. She loved Sahadeva more than her own sons. But that brave son of Madravati did not save her."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Hearing this, all of them clung to each other and wept. The five Pandavas were afflicted by grief, like creatures at the time of the destruction of a yuga. The sounds of those Indras among men weeping filled the rooms of the palace and seemed to rise up to the space between heaven and earth.'

## Chapter 1978(47)

'Narada said, "The king did not suffer a futile death from the fire. That is what I heard there. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! This is what happened to the king who was Vichitravirya's son. The intelligent one entered the forest and subsisted on air. He kindled the sacrificial fires. In that desolate forest, the officiating priests then cast those sacrificial fires away and the supreme among Bharatas left, as he wished. That fire began to rage in the forest.[6] It is this fire that blazed in the forest. That is what the ascetics told me. O bull among the Bharata lineage! As I have told you earlier, the king voluntarily allowed himself to be burnt down in a marshy area around the Jahnavi. O unblemished one! O Yudhishthira! This is what I got to know from the sages whom I met on the banks of the Bhagirathi. O lord of the earth! The king was thus consumed by his own fire.[7] Since the king has gone to the supreme objective, you should not sorrow. O Pandava! There is no doubt that your mother was devoted to serving her seniors and has obtained an extremely great success. O Kouravya! You should perform the water rites for them. With your brothers, arrange for all the prescribed rites."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'O bull among the Bharata lineage! The lord of the earth, the bearer of the burden of the Pandava lineage, departed with his brothers and his wives. Because of their devotion towards the king, so did the inhabitants of the city and the countryside. Clad in a single piece of garment, they went towards the Ganga. All the bulls among the Kurus immersed themselves in the waters there. With Yuyutsu at the forefront,[8] they offered water to the great-souled one. They also did this for Gandhari and Pritha in the prescribed way, pronouncing their names and their gotras. Having performed the rites of purification, they returned, but remained outside the city.[9] They sent men who

knew the ordinances about the funeral rites. O best among the Kuru lineage! They went to Gangadvara, where the king had been consumed. The lord of the earth[10] had given those men riches to perform the cremation rites in Gangadvara. On the twelfth day, the lord of men purified himself. For the funeral ceremony, Pandava gave away many types of dakshina. In Dhritarashtra's name, the lord of the earth gave away gold, silver, cattle and extremely expensive beds. Naming them separately, the king also gave away different gifts in the names of the energetic Gandhari and Pritha. Every brahmana received whatever he wanted and as much as he wanted. There were beds, food, vehicles, gems, jewels and riches. In the names of the lord of the earth and his mothers, the king gave away vehicles, spreads, objects of pleasure, female slaves and female servants. Having given away large quantities at the funeral ceremony, the intelligent lord of the earth again entered Varanasahvya.[11] The men who had gone, following the king's commands, also completed the cremation rites and returned with the remains. As is prescribed, these remains were worshipped with many kinds of garlands and fragrances. The king placed these remains in the proper places and performed the rites. O king! Narada comforted King Yudhishthira, the one with dharma in his soul. The supreme rishi then took his leave and went away wherever he wished. In this way, the intelligent Dhritarashtra spent fifteen years in the city and three years in the forest. He always gave away gifts in the names of his sons, kin, matrimonial allies, friends, brothers and relatives who had been slain in the war. With his kin and relatives dead, King Yudhishthira was distressed in his mind, but bore the burden of the kingdom.'

*This ends Naradagamana Parva and also ends Ashrama-Vasika Parva.*



# Section Ninety-Three
# *Mousala Parva*

*This section has 273 shlokas and 9 chapters.*

*Chapter 1979(1): 11 shlokas*
*Chapter 1980(2): 20 shlokas*
*Chapter 1981(3): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1982(4): 46 shlokas*
*Chapter 1983(5): 25 shlokas*
*Chapter 1984(6): 15 shlokas*
*Chapter 1985(7): 22 shlokas*
*Chapter 1986(8): 74 shlokas*
*Chapter 1987(9): 38 shlokas*

*In the 18-parva classification, Mousala Parva is the 16th. In the 100-parva classification, Mousala Parva constitutes Section 93. The word* musala *means club or mace. The Yadavas are cursed by sages that they will be destroyed by clubs. Grass turns to clubs and the Yadavas kill each other with these. Balarama and Krishna give up their lives on earth. Arjuna's powers vanish. In the numbering of the chapters in Mousala Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Mousala Parva.*

## Chapter 1979(1)

Vaishampayana said, ‘When thirty-six years had passed, Yudhishthira, descendant of the Kuru lineage, saw contrary portents. Rough and violent winds began to blow, showering stones. Birds began to circle around on the left.[1] The giant rivers retraced their courses. The directions were covered in mist. From the sky, meteors showered down on the ground, with blazing coals. O king! The solar disc was covered in dust. When it arose, the sun always seemed to be without any rays and headless torsos could be seen in it. The sun and the moon were seen to be enveloped in terrible circles. These had three colours, black and rough at the extremities and with red and hues like ash elsewhere. There were many other omens, signifying fear and terror. O king! These could be seen continuously and caused anxiety in the minds. After some time, Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, heard of the carnage that had occurred among the Vrishnis because of the clubs. Pandava heard that only Vasudeva and Rama[2] had escaped. He summoned his brothers, to discuss what should be done. Having heard that the Vrishnis had been destroyed because of the force of the brahmana’s staff,[3] the Pandavas were distressed and consulted each other. The brave ones could not believe the death of Vasudeva, the wielder of the Sharnga bow.[4] It was like the drying up of the ocean. Hearing about the incident with the clubs, they were overcome by sorrow and grief. Distressed and devoid of resolution, the Pandavas sat down.’

## Chapter 1980(2)

Janamejaya asked, ‘O illustrious one! While Vasudeva looked on, how were the Andhakas, the Vrishnis and the maharatha Bhojas destroyed?’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘After thirty-six years passed, there was a great destruction of the Vrishnis. Goaded by destiny, they killed each other with clubs.’

Janamejaya asked, ‘Who cursed the brave Vrishnis, Andhakas and Bhojas and caused their destruction? O best of brahmanas! Tell me in detail.’

Vaishampayana said, ‘One day, those brave ones, Sarana and the others,[5] saw Vishvamitra, Kanva and Narada, store of austerities, when they came to Dvaraka. They placed Samba ahead of them and dressed him up as a woman. Goaded by the rod of destiny, they approached them and said, “This is the wife of the infinitely energetic Babhru and desires a son. O rishis! O virtuous ones! Do you know how she can give birth?” O king! Speaking in this way, they sought to deceive those brahmanas. O lord of men! Listen to what those sages said in reply. “Vasudeva’s son, Samba, will give birth to a terrible and iron club for the destruction of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas. You are evil in conduct, cruel and insolent. With the exception of Rama and Janardana, you will exterminate your entire lineage. The one with the plough as his weapon[6] will go to the ocean and cast aside his handsome body there. When the great-souled Krishna is lying down on the ground, Jara will pierce him.” They

spoke in this way to the evil-souled ones who had tried to deceive them. The eyes of the sages were red with rage and they glanced towards each other. Having said this, the sages went off to see Keshava.

'Madhusudana told the Vrishnis what he had heard. The intelligent one knew about the end and told them that it would indeed happen in this way. Having told them this, Hrishikesha again entered his own house. The lord of the universe did not desire that the end should come about in any other way. Next day, Samba gave birth to a club. This was for the destruction of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas and looked like Yama's giant messenger.[7] Because of the terrible curse, he gave birth to this and this was reported to the king.[8] The king was distressed and instructed that this should be crushed into tiny fragments. On the instructions of the king, men flung these into the ocean. Ahuka's instructions were proclaimed throughout the city. "From today, for all the residents of the city, in the houses of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas, there will be no drinking of liquor. If there is any man who does not listen to this and prepares liquor, he will himself be impaled alive on a stake and so will his relatives." Out of fear for the king, everyone followed this rule. The men obeyed the commands of the great-souled king.'

## Chapter 1981(3)

Vaishampayana said, 'The Vrishnis and the Andhakas tried in this way. But Death always wandered around, in all their homes. His embodied form was that of a fierce and malformed man, dark and tawny, and with a shaved head. Sometimes, the Vrishnis saw him looking into their houses. At other times, they couldn't see him. Day by day, fierce and terrible winds began to blow and there were many other evil portents for the destruction of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas and these made the body hair stand up. Rats covered the roads and the pots[9] were shattered. Sarika birds shrieked outside their houses and even inside the homes of the Vrishnis. Whether it was night or whether it was day, those sounds did not cease. The cranes made sounds like owls. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The goats made sounds like jackals. Pigeons wandered around in the houses of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas. Goaded by destiny, there were other birds, pale in complexion and red of feet. Asses were born from cows and elephants from donkeys. Cats were born from bitches and mice from mongooses. When they committed wicked deeds, the Vrishnis no longer repented. They hated and disrespected brahmanas, ancestors, gods and seniors. Rama and Janardana were alone the exceptions. Wives deceived their husbands and husbands cheated their wives. When a fire was lit, the flames circled to the left. Sometimes flames flared out and these were separately blue and red. When the sun was setting or rising, those wicked men always saw that it was surrounded by headless torsos. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O lord of men! When clean food was cooked in the kitchen, at the time of eating, it was seen to be full of worms. When great-souled ones meditated and chanted, instead of those sounds, the sounds of running feet could be heard, though no one was seen. The nakshatras repeatedly clashed against each other. No one could any longer see his own planet.[10] When Panchajanya[11] was blown in the houses of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas, in every direction, instead of its sound, one could hear the terrible sounds of donkeys braying. 'On seeing this Hrishikesha

realized that the time of catastrophe had arrived. He saw that the thirteenth lunar tithi had merged into the night of the new moon and said, “Rahu has devoured the fourteenth and fifteenth lunar tithis. This happened at the time of the Bharata war and has again occurred for our destruction.” Remembering that time, Janardana thought. The slayer of Keshi reflected,[12] “Thirty-six years have passed since the time when Gandhari was tormented by sorrow on account of her sons and the slaying of her relatives. She was afflicted and the time has arrived. On an earlier occasion, when the battle formations were arrayed, Yudhishthira saw similar extremely terrible portents and spoke about them. That kind of time has arrived.” Thinking in this way, Vasudeva wished to make this come true.[13] The scorcher of enemies instructed that they should leave for a visit to a tirtha. On Keshava’s instructions, the men issued such a proclamation. The bulls among men prepared to visit a tirtha on the shores of the ocean.’

## Chapter 1982(4)

Vaishampayana said, ‘In their sleep during the night, the women saw a dark lady with white teeth enter Dvaraka and run around there, laughing and plundering. Extremely terrible rakshasas were seen to steal ornaments, umbrellas, standards and armour. Krishna’s chakra had been given to him by Agni.[14] Its handle was made out of iron and it was as firm as the vajra. While the Vrishnis looked on, it disappeared into the sky. His chariot was divine and was like the sun in complexion. While Daruka[15] looked on, the four horses, supreme among horses and as swift as thought, dragged it away along the turbulent surface of the ocean. Rama and Janardana’s great standards had a palm tree and Suparna respectively and were greatly honoured by them.[16] They were taken away by apsaras who, day and night, asked the maharatha Andhakas and Vrishnis to go on a visit to a place of pilgrimage. With the women from the inner quarters, those bulls among men desired to set out on a visit to a tirtha. The Andhakas and the Vrishnis prepared food, drink, many kinds of liquor and large quantities of meat. They were addicted to liquor. Those handsome and fiercely energetic ones emerged from the city on vehicles, horses and elephants. With their wives and with large quantities of food and drink, the Yadavas went to Prabhasa and began to dwell in that region, just as they had done at home.

‘The brave Uddhava[17] was accomplished in matters of artha and knew about yoga. While they dwelt on the shores of the ocean, he came and sought permission[18] to depart. Hari knew that the Vrishnis were about to be destroyed and did not wish to restrain him. He joined his hands in salutation and greeted the great-souled one who was about to leave. The time had come for the maharatha Vrishnis and Andhakas. They saw Uddhava leave, enveloping heaven and earth in his energy. Food had been cooked for the great-souled brahmanas. They mixed this with the scent of liquor and gave it away to monkeys. Those fiercely energetic ones then started a great festivity of drinking in Prabhasa. There were hundreds of trumpets and there were actors and dancers. In Krishna’s presence, Rama, Kritavarma, Yuyudhana,[19] Gada and Babhru started to drink. In the midst of the assembly, Yuyudhana became intoxicated. He disrespected Kritavarma and said, “Is there anyone who thinks himself to be a kshatriya who will kill those who are asleep and are therefore almost as if dead? O Hardikya! The Yadavas will not tolerate what you have done.” When Yuyudhana said this, Pradyumna, foremost

among warriors, praised these words and dishonoured Kritavarma. Kritavarma became extremely enraged. He stretched out his left hand in contempt and replied, “When Bhurishrava was in a state of praya in the battle, you severed his arm. How could a brave person have brought him down and slain him in such a cruel fashion?”[20] Hearing these words, Keshava, the destroyer of enemy heroes, cast an angry and oblique glance of anger.[21] Satyaki reminded Madhusudana about the Syamantaka gem that used to be with Satrajit.[22] Hearing this, Satyabhama was enraged. In her rage, she approached Janardana and sat on his lap. In his rage, Satyaki arose and spoke these words. “I truthfully take a pledge this one will go where the five sons of Droupadi, Dhrishtadyumna and Shikhandi have gone. While they were asleep, this evil-souled one killed them in their sleep. This wicked Kritavarma was aided by Drona’s son. O slender-waisted one! His lifespan and fame have come to an end.” Speaking in this way, he angrily picked up a sword and though he was near Keshava, attacked him[23] and angrily severed his head. Once Yuyudhana had killed him, he attacked the others in all directions and began to kill them, though Hrishikesha sought to restrain him.

‘O great king! All of them were goaded by destiny. The Bhojas and the Andhakas united and surrounded Shini’s descendant.[24] Janardana saw them descend, angrily and forcefully. But knowing that the time had come, the greatly energetic one was not enraged. They were driven by intolerance and were intoxicated by the liquor. They began to strike Yuyudhana with the vessels from which they had been eating. Seeing that Shini’s descendant was being struck, Rukmini’s son[25] became angry. He rushed forward to free Satyaki, Shini’s descendant, who was engaged with the Bhojas and the Andhakas. However, while Krishna looked on, those two were slain by the many. On seeing that Shini’s descendant and his own son had been killed, Keshava, the descendant of the Yadu lineage, angrily picked up a clump of *eraka* grass in his hand. This turned into a terrible club that was as firm as the vajra. With this, Krishna slew all those who were in front of him. Goaded by time, in that tumult, the Andhakas, the Bhojas, the Shinis and the Vrishnis slew each other with clubs. O king! O lord! Whenever anyone plucked out a clump of eraka grass, this was seen to turn into something like the vajra. The grass was seen to turn into clubs there. O lord of the earth! Know that all this happened because of the brahmana’s staff. O king! Whenever a blade of grass was hurled, it was seen to become a firm club that was like the vajra and became something that could pierce even impenetrable objects. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Son killed father and father killed son. They were intoxicated. They descended on each other and crushed each other. The Kukuras and the Andhakas were like insects falling into a fire. While they were being killed, they didn’t entertain any thoughts of running away. Knowing that the time of destruction had come, the mighty-armed Madhusudana stood there, looking on and with the club upraised. Madhava saw that Samba had been killed and so had Charudeshna. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! With Pradyumna and Aniruddha also killed, he became angry. Seeing that Gada was lying down, he became extremely wrathful. The wielder of Sharnga, chakra and the club slew all those who were left. When they were killed, the greatly energetic Babhru, the destroyer of enemy cities, and Daruka spoke to Dasharha. Listen. “O illustrious one! All of them have been killed by you. Let us follow Rama’s footsteps and go where he has gone.”’

## Chapter 1983(5)

Vaishampayana said, ‘Daruka, Keshava and Babhru left and followed Rama’s footsteps. They saw the infinitely valorous Rama seated in a desolate spot, at the foot of a tree. Krishna approached the great one and gave Daruka the following instruction. “Swiftly go to the Kurus and tell Partha about this great destruction of the Yadus. On hearing about how the Yadavas have died because of the curse of brahmanas, let Arjuna come here quickly.” Thus addressed, Daruka, who was senseless in grief, left on a chariot for the Kurus. After Daruka left, Keshava saw that Babhru was still near him and spoke these words. “Go quickly and protect the women. Greedy for riches, let the bandits not cause any violence to them.” He was still intoxicated with liquor and distressed because of the slaughter of his relatives. However, instructed by Keshava, he departed. Babhru had gone only a short distance away from Keshava. He has also been covered in the curse of the brahmanas. Suddenly and swiftly, a club released from a hunter’s hand arrived and slew him. On seeing that Babhru was now dead, Krishna spoke these words to his elder brother. “O Rama! Wait here for me, until I have handed over the care of the women to our kin.” Janardana entered the city of Dvaravati and spoke these words to his father. “Wait for Dhananjaya’s arrival and protect all these women. Rama is waiting for me on the outskirts of the forest. I have to go to him now. I foresaw this slaughter of the Yadus even before I foresaw that of the kings and the bulls among the Kuru lineage. Without the Yadus, I am incapable of looking at this city of the Yadavas. Listen to me. I will go to the forest and practise austerities, together with Rama.” Having said this, Krishna touched his feet with his head and quickly departed.

‘Loud sounds of lamentation arose from the women and the children who were in the city. Hearing the sounds of the weeping women, Keshava returned and said, “Savyasachi will arrive in the city. That foremost among men will free you from your grief.” Keshava went and saw Rama in that desolate spot in the forest. He saw him immersed in yoga and a giant serpent was emerging from his mouth. Its complexion was white and that great being headed towards the great ocean. It possessed one thousand heads, was as large as a mountain and was an inhabitant of Bhogavati.[26] Its face was red and it freed itself from the former body. It moved towards the ocean. Divine serpents and sacred rivers were there to receive it. O king! Karkotaka, Vasuki, Prithushrava, Varuna, Kunjara, Mishri, Shankha, Kumuda, Pundarika, the great-souled naga Dhritarashtra, Hrada, Kratha, Shitikantha, Agrateja, the nagas Chakramanda and Atishanda, Durmukha and Ambarisha, the best among nagas and King Varuna himself came forward to welcome and honour it.[27] They worshipped it with padya, arghya and other rites.

‘Vasudeva possessed divine sight. When his brother had departed, he knew that everyone was gone. For some time, he wandered around in that desolate forest, thinking. The greatly energetic one then sat down on the ground. He thought about all the words that the excellent Gandhari had spoken to him earlier. Krishna also remembered what Durvasa had said when his body had been smeared with payasam.[28] The great one thought about the destruction of the Andhakas and the Vrishnis and the destruction of the Kurus. Having decided that the time had come, he restrained his senses. He restrained his senses and his speech. Krishna lay down, immersed in great yoga. A fierce hunter named Jara arrived at that spot, searching for deer.[29] The hunter saw Keshava lying down in yoga and took him to be a deer. With an arrow, Jara swiftly struck him on the sole of the foot. He then quickly advanced, desiring to seize what he had struck. The hunter saw a man immersed in yoga, with many arms and attired in yellow garments. He thought he had committed a grave sin and severely

distressed, touched his feet with his head. The great-souled one comforted him. Enveloping heaven and earth in his prosperity, he rose upwards. He reached heaven and was welcomed by Vasava, the Ashvins, Rudra, the Adityas, the Vasus, the Vishvadevas, the sages, the siddhas, the foremost among gandharvas and the apsaras. O king! Then, the fiercely energetic, powerful, undecaying, great-souled and illustrious Narayana went to his own region, which is impossible to fathom. O king! Krishna met the gods, the rishis and the charanas. The best among gandharvas and apsaras and the siddhas and the sadhyas bowed down and worshipped him. O king! The gods, the best among sages and their eloquent followers worshipped the lord of everything. The gandharvas served and praised him. Delighted, Puruhuta[30] also honoured him.'

## Chapter 1984(6)

Vaishampayana said, 'Daruka went to the Kurus and met the maharatha Parthas. He told them how the Vrishnis had destroyed each other with clubs. On hearing that the Varshneyas, the Bhojas, the Kukuras and the Andhakas had been destroyed, the Pandavas were tormented by grief and their minds were terrified. Arjuna, Keshava's beloved friend, took their leave and went to see his maternal uncle, saying, "Nothing remains." With Daruka, the lord went to the abode of the Vrishnis. The brave one saw Dvaraka, which looked like a woman with her husband dead. Earlier, the protector of the world used to be the protector of those women. Partha saw them shrieking there, without a protector and bereft of protection. There were sixteen thousand of Vasudeva's wives. When they saw Arjuna arrive, they began to wail loudly. On seeing them, Kouravya Arjuna's eyes became full of tears. They were without Krishna and without their sons and he was incapable of looking at them. The Vrishnis and the Andhakas were like water.[31] The horses were fish and the chariots were rafts. The sounding of musical instruments and the clatter of chariots were like the roar of the currents. The houses were tirthas and giant crocodiles. The jewels were accumulations of moss. The firm fortifications were like garlands. The roads were like flowing whirlpools in the water. The crossroads were large lakes. In the river of Dvaraka, Rama and Krishna were giant crocodiles. Devoured by the noose of destiny, that river was now terrible, flowing towards Vaitarani.[32] The intelligent Arjuna saw that it was now without the bulls among the Vrishnis. It was without prosperity and cheerless, like a lotus during the winter. Partha saw Dvaraka and Krishna's wives. He wailed loudly, eyes overflowing with tears, and fell down on the ground, senseless. O lord of the earth! Satya,[33] Satrajit's daughter, and Rukmini also wept and fell down, alongside Dhananjaya. They raised him and made him sit on a golden seat. They surrounded the great-souled and spoke words of praise about Govinda. They spoke to Pandava, who comforted the women and then left, wishing to meet his maternal uncle.'

## Chapter 1985(7)

Vaishampayana said, 'The brave and great-souled Anakadundubhi[34] was lying down. The bull among the Kurus saw him, tormented by grief over his son. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Partha's chest was broad and his arms were mighty. With his eyes overflowing with tears and with his voice afflicted with grief, he seized his feet. The mighty-armed and aged one embraced Arjuna with his arms. Remembering his sons, his brother's sons, and all his sons' sons, daughters' sons and friends, he was extremely distracted and wept. 'Vasudeva said, "O Arjuna! There were hundreds of times when they conquered kings and daityas. O Arjuna! Though I am alive, I do not see them. Death will come to me with great difficulty. Those two[35] were your disciples. O Arjuna! You always loved them and showed them a great deal of respect. O Partha! It is because of their sins that the Vrishnis have faced destruction. Among the best of the Vrishnis, those two were held to be *atirathas*. In speaking about Pradyumna and Yuyudhana, you used to boast. O tiger among Kurus! In addition to Krishna, they were always like my sons. O Dhananjaya! Those two are the main reason behind the destruction of the Vrishnis. O Arjuna! However, I do not censure Shini's descendant or Hardikya, or for that matter, Akrura or Rukmini's son. The curse was the true reason. The lord of the universe used his valour to defeat Keshi and Kamsa. O Partha! He beheaded the lord of Chedi,[36] who was proud of his valour. Madhusudana defeated the nishada Ekalavya, Kalingas, Magadhas, Gandharas, the king of Kashi, kings from the desert regions and kings from the east, the south and the mountainous regions. Why did he disregard what was going to happen? On seeing his sons, grandsons, brothers and friends slain and lying down, he told me, 'O bull among men! The time for the end of our lineage has arrived. Bibhatsu will come to this city of Dvaravati. Tell him about the great carnages that has happened among the Vrishnis. O lord! When that greatly energetic one hears about the destruction of the Yadus, without thinking about it, he will swiftly arrive here. Know that I am Arjuna and Arjuna is me. O Madhava! Know that you must do whatever he asks you to. Pandava will know what the occasion demands for the women and the children. Bibhatsu will also perform your funeral rites. When Dhananjaya has left, this city, with its walls and mansions, will instantly be swallowed up by the ocean. I will go to some sacred spot and resort to the rituals. With the intelligent Rama, I will wait for the right time.' Hrishikesha, whose valour is unimaginable, told me this. The lord then left me with the children and went to whichever direction he desired. I have thought about those two great-souled brothers[37] and about the terrible destruction of the kin. Afflicted by grief, I have not eaten. O Pandava! I will not eat. Nor will I live. It is through good fortune that I have met you. O Partha! Do everything that Krishna spoke about. O Partha! This kingdom, these women and these jewels are yours. O slayer of enemies! I wish to cast aside my breath of life."'

## Chapter 1986(8)

Vaishampayana said, 'Bibhatsu, the scorcher of enemies, was thus addressed by his maternal uncle. He was cheerless and distressed in his mind and replied to Vasudeva, "O maternal uncle! O lord! Without the foremost among the Vrishnis and the Madhus, I am incapable of looking at the earth for a long period of time. The king,[38] Bhimasena, Pandava Sahadeva, Nakula and Yajnaseni as the sixth, hold the same kind of view. It is certain that the time has also come for the king to depart. O supreme

among those who know about time! Know that the time has also arrived for you. O scorcher of enemies! By all means possible, I will first take the women, the children and the aged among the Vrishnis to Indraprastha." Having said this, Dhananjaya spoke these words to Daruka. "I wish to quickly see the advisers and the brave ones among the Vrishnis." Having said this, the brave maharatha Arjuna, who was sorrowing, entered the assembly hall of the Yadavas, known as Sudharma. When he arrived there, all the ordinary people, the brahmanas and the citizens, surrounded him there. All of them were distressed in their minds and were almost unconscious. Partha was himself distressed and spoke these words. "I will myself take the Vrishni and Andhaka people to Shakraprastha.[39] Everything in this city will be flooded by the ocean. Arrange vehicles and all kinds of jewels. This Vajra[40] will be the king in Shakraprastha. Seven days from now, we will depart when the sparkling sun rises. Make arrangements without delay and let all of us dwell outside."[41] Thus addressed by Partha of the unblemished deeds, the citizens anxiously made arrangements for saving themselves. Partha spent that night in Keshava's house. He was suddenly overwhelmed by great grief and confusion. When it was next morning, the powerful Shouri Vasudeva united himself in great energy and left for the supreme destination. A great sound was heard in Vasudeva's house. The women shrieked terribly and wept. All of them had dishevelled hair and they cast aside their ornaments and garlands. The women beat on their breasts with their hands and lamented piteously. Devaki, Bhadra, Rohini and Madira, supreme among women, seated themselves with their husband.[42] O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Shouri's body was covered with many garlands. Partha arranged for it to be drawn out of the city, on a large vehicle dragged by men. O bull among men! All the citizens and residents of Dvaraka were filled with grief and sorrow and followed it. The umbrella of a horse sacrifice[43] was held aloft, ahead of the vehicle. The officiating priests advanced, with kindled fires. The ornamented wives followed the brave one. They were surrounded by thousands of women and thousands of daughters-in-law. There was a spot that the great-souled one had loved while he was alive. It was resolved that the funeral rites for the father would be performed there. The funeral pyre of the brave one from the Shura lineage was ignited by his son.[44] The four beautiful women also ascended the fire, with the body of the husband who had departed. The four women also followed him. The descendant of the Pandu lineage ignited it, with sandalwood and other diverse kinds of fragrant wood. A loud sound arose from the kindling and the fire. There was the sound of chants from Sama hymns and men weeping. The brave children from the Vrishni lineage, with Vajra as the foremost and all the women offered water to the great-souled one. Phalguna arranged for dharma where there was no longer any dharma possible.[45] O bull among the Bharata lineage! He then went to the place where the Vrishnis had been destroyed. On seeing that they had been brought down in the carnage, he was extremely miserable. However, Kourvaya did everything that was appropriate for the occasion. All the rites were performed according to seniority, for all those who had been slain through the curse of the brahmanas and the generation of the clubs. He searched out the bodies of both Rama and Vasudeva[46] and had them cremated by men who were accomplished in such tasks. Following the ordinances, Pandava performed the funeral rites.

'On the seventh day, he mounted a chariot and swiftly departed. There were other chariots yoked to horses and vehicles drawn by bulls, mules and camels. The wives of the brave Vrishnis followed on these, afflicted by grief and weeping. They followed the great-souled Dhananjaya, Pandu's son. On

Partha's instructions, the servants of the Andhakas and the Vrishnis, horse riders and chariot riders surrounded the women, the aged, the young and the citizens, who were without any brave ones to defend them, and advanced. Elephant riders advanced on elephants that were as large as mountains. There were foot soldiers for protection. They also raised their weapons and advanced. All the sons of the Andhakas and the Vrishnis followed Partha. There were prosperous brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras. Ahead of them were Vasudeva's sixteen thousand wives, his great riches and the intelligent Krishna's grandson, Vajra. Bhoja, Vrishni and Andhaka women also advanced, with their husbands killed. There were thousands of them, indeed tens of millions. That group of Vrishnis was like an ocean. Partha, foremost among warriors, great in his knowledge of dharma and the conqueror of enemy cities, escorted it. After the people departed, the ocean, the abode of makaras, flooded Dvaraka, which was still full of jewels, with its waters. The people who were residents of Dvaraka looked at this extraordinary sight. They said that this was nothing but destiny and advanced faster and faster.

'Dhananjaya made the Vrishni women rest in beautiful groves, mountains and near rivers. The intelligent one arrived at the prosperous land of the five rivers. The lord arranged for them to dwell there, in a region that was full of cattle, other animals and grain. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Some bandits saw that the husbands of these women had been killed and that they were being led by Partha alone. They became greedy. Greed robbed those evildoers of their senses. Those *abhiras*[47] saw the opportunity to do something wicked and consulted each other. "Arjuna is the only warrior. There are the aged and the young. The husbands have been killed. The other warriors are without energy and are passing through our territory." Thousands of bandits descended and began to strike them with sticks. Desiring to steal the property, those people attacked the Vrishnis. As if goaded by the progress of time and desiring the riches, they attacked. With his followers, Kounteya swiftly returned. The mighty-armed Arjuna laughed and said, "O wicked ones who do not know about dharma! If you wish to be safe and do not wish to die, retreat. Otherwise, you will have to sorrow when my arrows mangle your bodies and you are killed by me." When the brave one spoke in this way, they paid no attention to his words. Arjuna repeatedly tried to restrain the foolish ones who had attacked.

'Arjuna then tried to string the giant, undecaying and divine bow, Gandiva. To be able to string it, he had to make a great deal of effort. While that tumultuous engagement was going on, he struggled and finally strung it. He then thought of his weapons, but couldn't remember them. In the engagement, he witnessed this great calamity of the strength of his arms having disappeared. The great and divine weapons no longer manifested themselves and he was ashamed. All the Vrishni warriors, those who were fighting on elephants, horses and chariots, were unable to prevent those men from stealing their possessions. As they attacked from different directions, they abducted many women. Though Partha made great efforts, he couldn't protect the people. While all the warriors looked on, in every direction, the best of women were seized. There were other women who voluntarily went with the robbers. Supported by the servants of the Vrishnis, the lord Partha Dhananjaya, forcefully shot arrows from Gandiva and struck the bandits. O king! However, in a short while, his arrows were exhausted. Earlier, his quivers used to be inexhaustible. But now, the arrows were exhausted. Seeing that his arrows were exhausted, he was filled with sorrow and grief. The son of Paka's chastiser used the ends of the bow to kill bandits. O Janamejaya! However, in every direction, while Partha looked on, the

mlechchhas seized the best of the Vrishni and Andhaka women. The lord Dhananjaya thought that this could be nothing other than destiny. He was full of sorrow and grief and sighed deeply. The weapons had disappeared and the valour of his arms had been destroyed. The bow was no longer under his control and his arrows had been exhausted. Partha was cheerless and thought.

'O king! He started to retreat and said, "This is nothing but destiny." The immensely intelligent one collected the remaining wives and the remaining jewels and went to Kurukshetra. Kouravya Dhananjaya arranged for the wives of the Vrishnis, with the remaining possessions, to reside there. There was a city named Martikavat. Partha, supreme among men, instated Hardikya's son[48] there and left the remaining wives of the king of Bhoja there. Pandava collected all the other old, young and women, those who were without brave ones to protect them, and made them reside in Shakraprastha. The one with dharma in his soul honoured the aged and the young and made the beloved son of Satyaki Yuyudhana reside along the banks of the Sarasvati. The slayer of enemy heroes gave the kingdom of Indraprastha to Vajra. Though Vajra tried to restrain them, Akrura's wives left for the forest. O king! Rukmini Gandhari,[49] Shaibya Haimavati and the queen Jambavati entered the fire. O king! Satyabhama and the other queens, honoured by Krishna, made up their minds to perform austerities and entered the forest. There were the men who had resided in Dvaravati and had followed Partha. Jaya divided them into different groups and handed them over to Vajra. The time having arrived, his eyes overflowing with tears, Arjuna did all this. O king! He then went and visited Krishna Dvaipayana in his hermitage.'

## Chapter 1987(9)

Vaishampayana said, 'O king! Arjuna, truthful in his speech, entered the hermitage. He saw the sage who was Satyavati's son seated alone. Knowing about dharma, he approached the one whose vows were great. As is proper, he reported, "My name is Arjuna" and waited. The sage who was Satyavati's son spoke words of welcome. Cheerfully, the great sage asked him to sit. He could see that Partha's mind was cheerless and that he was sighing repeatedly. Seeing that he was overcome with sorrow, Vyasa asked, "Have you been stained in any way? Have you been struck? Have you stolen a brahmana's possessions? Have you been defeated in a battle? It can be discerned that your prosperity has vanished. O bull among the Bharata lineage! I do not know what has transpired. O Partha! I deserve to hear it. You should quickly tell me what has happened."

'Arjuna replied, "His complexion was like that of a cloud. He was handsome and large, with eyes like lotus petals. That Krishna, with Rama, has given up his body and has gone to heaven. Because of a curse imposed by brahmanas, the brave ones among the Vrishnis have destroyed themselves with clubs. There was an encounter in Prabhasa that led to the death of brave ones and it made the body hair stand up. O brahmana! They were brave. They were great-souled. They were proud as lions and extremely strong. The Bhojas, the Vrishnis and the Andhakas have killed each other in a clash. Their arms were like clubs and they could withstand clubs, maces and spears. Behold the progress of time. They have been slain by eraka grass. There were five hundred thousand ones, with the strength of arms. They attacked each other and have been killed. Because of the destruction of those infinitely

energetic ones, I am repeatedly suffering. I keep thinking of the Yadus and the illustrious Krishna. It[50] is like the drying up of the ocean, the moving of the mountains, the falling down of the sky or the cooling down of a fire. I think that the death of the wielder of the Sharnga bow cannot be believed. Without Krishna, I do not wish to remain in this world any more. O store of austerities! Listen to something else that is even more painful. When I repeatedly think about this, my mind is shattered. O brahmana! In the region of the five rivers, while I looked on, thousands of Vrishni women were abducted by abhiras. Though I picked up my bow, I found that I was unable to string it. The valour in my arms is no longer like that in former times. O great sage! All my diverse kinds of weapons have been destroyed. In a short while, all my arrows were exhausted. That man's soul was immeasurable. He was the wielder of the conch shell, the chakra and the club. He was four-armed and attired in yellow garments. He was dark and his eyes were as large as the petals of lotuses. Earlier, the extremely radiant one used to be ahead of me, on my chariot, when I burnt down the enemy soldiers. I am unable to see him now. He was the one who first burnt down the enemy soldiers with his energy. With the arrows released from Gandiva, I brought them down later. O excellent one! Since I am unable to see him, I am distressed and my mind is whirling. I am depressed and cannot find any peace. Without the brave Janardana, I am not interested in remaining alive. When I heard that Vishnu had departed, the directions disappeared before me. My kin and my valour have been destroyed. I am like one empty and am running around. O excellent one! You should instruct me about what is best for me."

'Vyasa replied, "The maharatha Vrishnis and Andhakas were consumed because of the curse of brahmanas. O tiger among Kurus! They have been destroyed and you should not grieve about this. Know that this was bound to happen. This was the destiny of those great-souled ones. That is the reason why, despite being able to counter it, Krishna ignored it. Krishna is capable of countering everything in the three worlds, mobile and immobile, not to speak of a curse imposed by learned ones. The wielder of the chakra and the club used to advance in front of your chariot. He was affectionate towards you. He is the ancient rishi, the four-armed Vasudeva. The one with the large eyes desired to reduce the burden of the earth. Having freed the entire universe, he went to his own supreme destination. O bull among men! O mighty-armed one! With you as his aide and with the help of Bhima and the twins, he accomplished a great task for the gods. O bull among the Kurus! I think that you have been extremely successful. Know that the time for your departure has arrived. In my view, that is the best thing for you. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Strength, intelligence, energy and power remain for as long as the time of adversity does not come. O Dhananjaya! Time is the root of everything. It is the seed of the universe. As it wishes, time also draws everything back again. A person who was strong can subsequently become weak. One can possess prosperity, or one can be commanded by others. Having accomplished their tasks, your weapons have now returned to wherever they came from. If time should so ordain, they will arrive in your hands again. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! The time has come for you to attain the greatest end. O bull among the Bharata lineage! I think that this will bring supreme benefit for you."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'Having heard these words of the infinitely energetic Vyasa, Partha took his leave and went to the city of Nagasahvya. The brave one entered the city and met Yudhishthira. Concerning the Vrishnis and the Andhakas, he told him everything that had happened.'

*This ends Mousala Parva.*



# Section Ninety-Four
# *Maha-Prasthanika Parva*

*This section has 106 shlokas 3 chapters.*

*Chapter 1988(1): 44 shlokas*
*Chapter 1989(2): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1990(3): 36 shlokas*

Maha *means great and* prasthana *means journey or departure. Thus,* maha-prasthana *literally means great journey, but stands for departure from this world, or death. Maha-Prasthanika Parva is about the departure of the Pandavas for the Himalayas and their deaths, one after another. It has the story of Dharma disguised as a dog and Yudhishthira's ascent to heaven, in his physical body. In the 18-parva classification, Maha-Prasthanika Parva is the 17th. In the 100-parva classification, Maha-Prasthanika Parva consists of Section 94 alone. In the numbering of the chapters in Maha-Prasthanika Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Maha-Prasthanika Parva.*

# Chapter 1988(1)

Janamejaya asked, ‘On hearing about the duel with the clubs in the lineage of the Vrishnis and the Andhakas and on hearing that Krishna had ascended to heaven, what did the Pandavas do?’

Vaishampayana replied, ‘Hearing about the great carnage caused among the Vrishnis, King Kourava made up his mind to give up his life and spoke these words to Arjuna. “O immensely wise one! Time cooks all creatures. I think all this has happened because of that. You should also consider that.” Thus addressed, Kounteya[1] only uttered the words, “Time! Time!” He agreed with the words his valiant elder brother had spoken. Discerning Arjuna’s intention, Bhimasena and the twins also agreed with the words that had been spoken by Savyasachi. Desiring dharma, they decided to depart and summoned Yuyutsu. Yudhishthira handed over the entire kingdom to the son of a vaishya.[2] Parikshit was instated as the king in his own kingdom.[3] The king who was the eldest of the Pandava sorrowfully told Subhadra, “This son of your son will be the king of the Kurus. The last of the Yadus, Vajra, has also been made a king. Parikshit will rule in Hastinapura and the Yadava in Shakraprastha. King Vajra should be protected by you and do not think of adharma in your mind.”[4] Having said this, the intelligent Dharmaraja, with dharma in his soul, together with his mothers,[5] attentively offered water to Vasudeva, his aged maternal uncle, Rama and the others. Following the prescribed rites, he instructed that the funeral ceremonies should be performed for all of them. He gave away jewels, garments, villages, horses and chariots, women and hundreds and thousands of cattle to the best among the brahmanas. The supreme among the Bharata lineage honoured Kripa and reverentially instructed that he would be the preceptor, handing over Parikshit to him as a disciple.

‘Yudhishthira honoured all the ordinary people. The rajarshi told all of them what he desired to do. On hearing his words, all the people of the city and the countryside were extremely anxious in their minds and did not welcome these words. They told the king, “This should not be done.” However, knowing about the progress of time and about dharma, the king did not listen to them. The one with dharma in his soul took the permission of the residents of the city and the countryside. He had made up his mind to leave and so had his brothers. Dharma’s son, Kouravya, King Yudhishthira, took off the ornaments from his body and donned the bark of trees. O lord of men! Bhima, Arjuna, the twins and the illustrious Droupadi—all of them donned garments made from the barks of trees. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They performed all the recommended beneficial rites. All the bulls among men then cast the sacred fire into water.[6] On seeing the bulls among men, all the women wept. They departed, with Droupadi as the sixth, just as in earlier times, they had left after being defeated in the game with the dice. But at the prospect of departure, the brothers were cheerful. After seeing the destruction of the Vrishnis and ascertaining Yudhishthira’s view, there was no other course.

‘There were the five brothers. Krishna was the sixth and a dog joined as the seventh. Including him, there were seven and the king left Gajasahvya.[7] For some distance, the citizens and the ladies of the inner quarters followed them. However, none of them was capable of speaking to them and urging them to return. Then, all the men who resided in the city returned and stood around Kripa, Yuyutsu and the others. O Kouravya! Ulupi, the daughter of a serpent, entered the waters of the Ganga.

Chitrangada left for the city of Manipura. All of Parikshit's mothers[8] surrounded him and began to instruct him.

'O Kouravya! The great-souled Pandavas and the illustrious Droupadi fasted and headed in an eastern direction. The great-souled ones immersed themselves in yoga, having decided to follow the dharma of renunciation. They passed through many countries, rivers and mountains. Yudhishthira walked in front, followed by Bhima. Arjuna came after him, followed by the twins, in the right order. O supreme among the Bharata lineage! The beautiful Droupadi, best among women, was at the rear. She was dark and her eyes were like the petals of lotuses. When the Pandavas left for the forest, a dog followed them. Gradually, the brave ones reached Louhitya,[9] an ocean full of water. O great king! Because of his love for precious things, Dhananjaya had still not let go off the divine bow, Gandiva, or the two inexhaustible quivers. They saw Agni standing before them, like a mountain. He stood there, barring their way, adopting a human form. The god with the seven flames addressed the Pandavas. "O sons of Pandu! Listen! O brave ones! Listen! Know me to be the god of fire. O mighty-armed one! O Yudhishthira! O scorcher of enemies! O Bhimasena! O Arjuna! O brave sons of the Ashvins! Listen to my words. O best among the Kurus! Using the powers of Arjuna and Narayana, I burnt down Khandava.[10] Your brother, Phalguna, can only go to the forest after casting aside the supreme weapon, Gandiva, not otherwise. The jewel, the chakra, which used to be with the great-souled Krishna, has vanished. When it is time, it will again appear in his hands. For Partha's sake, I had earlier brought Gandiva, best among bows, from Varuna. It should now be returned to Varuna." At this, all the brothers urged Dhananjaya to do this. He flung it into the water, together with the two great and inexhaustible quivers. O best of the Bharata lineage! After this, Agni vanished. The brave Pandavas now headed in a southern direction. O tiger among the Bharata lineage! On the northern shores of the salty ocean, they proceeded in a south-western direction. Then they again headed in a western direction. They saw Dvaraka, flooded by the ocean. The supreme among the Bharatas then again headed towards the north. Devoted to the dharma of yoga, they desired to circle the entire earth.'

## Chapter 1989(2)

Vaishampayana said, 'Restraining their souls and immersing themselves in yoga, they headed in a northern direction. They saw the giant mountains, the Himalayas. Having passed beyond it, they saw an ocean of sand. There, they saw the giant mountain of Meru, with an excellent summit. All of them proceeded swiftly, devoting themselves to the dharma of yoga. However, Yajnaseni deviated from yoga and fell down on the ground. On seeing that she had fallen down, the immensely strong Bhimasena glanced towards Yajnaseni and spoke to Dharmaraja. "O scorcher of enemies! This princess never committed an act of adharma. O king! Why has Krishna[11] fallen down on the ground?" Yudhishthira replied, "O supreme among men! She had a great partiality for Dhananjaya. She has reaped the fruits of that." Having said this, the king who was Dharma's son didn't look back. The intelligent bull among men, with dharma in his soul, controlled his mind. The intelligent Sahadeva also fell down on the ground. On seeing that he had fallen down, Bhima spoke to the king. "Without

any pride, he served all of us. Why has Madravati's[12] son fallen down on the ground?" Yudhishthira replied, "He thought that there was no one who was his equal in wisdom. O son of a king! It is because of that sin that he has fallen down." Having said this, he left Sahadeva there and proceeded. Kounteya Yudhishthira went on, with his brothers and the dog. On seeing that Krishna and Pandava Sahadeva had fallen down, the brave Nakula, who loved his relatives, was afflicted and also fell down. Seeing that the handsome and brave Nakula had fallen down, Bhima spoke to the king again. "He had dharma in his soul and his adherence to it never suffered. He followed the words of his brothers. In the world, Nakula was unmatched in his beauty. Yet, he has fallen down on the ground." Thus addressed by Bhimasena, Yudhishthira replied, "Nakula possessed dharma in his soul and was supreme among all the intelligent ones. However, he held a view, like Diti's offspring,[13] that there was no one who was his equal in beauty. In his mind, he thought that there was no one who was superior to him. O Vrikodara! Understand. This is the reason why Nakula has fallen down. O brave one! Anything ordained for a person is bound to happen." On seeing that they had fallen down, Pandava, the one with the white horses and the scorcher of enemies,[14] was tormented by grief and also fell down. That tiger among men possessed Shakra's energy. On seeing that the invincible one had fallen down and was about to die, Bhima spoke to the king. "I cannot remember any falsehood that this great-souled one has wilfully uttered. What is the transgression, as a result of which, he has fallen down on the ground?" Yudhishthira replied, "Arjuna always said that he would burn down the enemy in a single day. Though he was proud of his valour, he wasn't able to accomplish that. That is the reason he has fallen down. Phalguna disrespected all the other wielders of the bow. Those who desire their own prosperity must always act as they have spoken." Having said this, the king proceeded. Bhima fell down. Having fallen down, Bhima addressed Dharmaraja Yudhishthira. "O king! Look towards me. I am loved by you and I have fallen down. What is the reason I have fallen down? If you know, tell me." Yudhishthira replied, "You ate too much and you boasted about your vigour. O Partha! You disrespected others. That is the reason you have fallen down on the ground." Having said this, without looking back, the mighty-armed one proceeded. The single dog followed him and I have spoken about it to you many times.'[15]

## Chapter 1990(3)

Vaishampayana said, 'Shakra arrived before Partha on a chariot, making all of heaven and earth echo with the roar, and asked him to ascend. On seeing that his brothers had fallen down, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira was overcome by grief and spoke these words to the one with the one thousand eyes. "My brothers have fallen down here. Let them come with me. O lord of the gods! Without my brothers, I do not desire to go to heaven. O Purandara! The princess was delicate and deserved happiness. Let her come with us. You should grant us this permission."

'Indra replied, "You will see your brothers and sons, together with Krishna and all the others. They have gone to heaven, ahead of you. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Do not grieve. O bull among the Bharata lineage! They have cast aside their human bodies and have gone there. However, there is no doubt that you will go to heaven in this body."

‘Yudhishthira said, “O lord of the past and the present! This dog has always been devoted to me. He should go with me. Because of compassion, that is my view.”

‘Indra replied, “O king! You will now obtain immortality, prosperity like mine, all kinds of great fame and the happiness of heaven. Abandon the dog. There is no lack of compassion in this.”

‘Yudhishthira said, “O one with one thousand eyes! How can a person who is noble perform an ignoble act? O noble one! That is exceedingly difficult to do. I do not want a prosperity that comes about by abandoning those who are devoted to me.”

‘Indra replied, “For those with dogs, there is no place in the world of heaven. Krodhavasha takes away their beneficial and good deeds.[16] O Dharmaraja! You should think about this. Abandon this dog. There is no lack of compassion in this.”

‘Yudhishthira said, “It is said that there is great sin in abandoning one who is devoted. In this world, this is equal to the killing of a brahmana. O great Indra! Ever since I have been born, I have patiently done that. Therefore, for the sake of my own happiness, how can I act in a contrary way now?”

‘Indra replied, “If gifts laid out for a sacrifice, or oblations poured into it, are seen by a dog, Krodhavasha takes the benefits away. Therefore, you should abandon this dog. If you abandon this dog, you will obtain the world of the gods. O brave one! Having abandoned your brothers and your beloved Krishna, you will obtain that world through your deeds. When you have given all of them up, why are you not ready to abandon the dog? Why are you confused?”

‘Yudhishthira said, “In the world of mortals, there is no friendship or enmity with those who are dead. I am incapable of reviving them. That is the reason I abandoned those who are no longer alive. O Shakra! It is my view that surrendering someone who was sought sanctuary, killing a woman, stealing the possessions of a brahmana and enmity towards a friend—these four are equal to the sin of abandoning someone who is devoted.”’

Vaishampayana said, ‘Hearing Dharmaraja’s words, the illustrious one, who was in the form of Dharma, was pleased.[17] He gently spoke these words, which were full of praise, to Yudhishthira, Indra among men. “O Indra among kings! You have been born in a noble lineage. You follow your father’s conduct and possess intelligence. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! You possess compassion towards all beings. O son! On an earlier occasion, I had tested you in Dvaitavana.[18] Desiring to fetch some water, your valiant brothers were slain. Forgetting about your brothers Bhima and Arjuna and showing equality between your mothers,[19] you desired that Nakula should be brought back to life. Now, instead of giving up the devoted dog, you have decided to forsake the chariot of the gods. O lord of men! Therefore, there is no one in heaven who is your equal. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Therefore, in your own body, you will obtain the eternal worlds. O best among the Bharata lineage! You will obtain a divine and supreme objective.” Dharma, Shakra, the Maruts, the Ashvins, the gods and the devarshis made Pandava ascend the chariot. The siddhas, who could roam around at will, left on their own celestial vehicles. They were sacred and radiant, auspicious in words, intelligence and deeds. The king, the extender of the Kuru lineage, climbed onto the chariot, which ascended swiftly, covering heaven and earth with its energy.

‘Narada was great in austerities and knew about all the worlds. He was great with words. From amidst those gods, he spoke these words. “There are rajarshis who have assembled here. However, the king of the Kurus has surpassed all their deeds with his own. He has enveloped the worlds with his

fame, energy, conduct and prosperity and has gone there in his own body. We have not heard of anyone other than Pandava who has accomplished that." Hearing Narada's words, the king, with dharma in his soul, spoke these words, after honouring the gods and the kings who were alongside. "My brothers have obtained a good state or a bad one. Those are the worlds that I also wish to go to." Hearing these words, Purandara, king of the gods, was filled with compassion and replied to Yudhishthira. "O Indra among kings! Dwell in this place. You have conquered it through your auspicious deeds. Why are you attached to human affection still? You have obtained supreme success and no other man has obtained it. O descendant of the Kuru lineage! Your brothers are incapable of obtaining that region. O lord of men! You are still touched by human sentiments. Behold heaven and the abodes of the gods, frequented by devarshis and siddhas." Yet again, Yudhishthira spoke these words to the lord who was the Indra of the gods. "O slayer of daityas! Without them, I am not interested in anything. I wish to go to the place where my brothers have gone. I wish to go where Droupadi, best among women and my beloved, is. She possessed the qualities of spirit and intelligence. She was buxom and dark."'

*This ends Maha-Prasthanika Parva.*



# Section Ninety-Five
# *Svargarohana Parva*

*This section has 194 shlokas and 5 chapters.*

*Chapter 1991(1): 26 shlokas*
*Chapter 1992(2): 54 shlokas*
*Chapter 1993(3): 41 shlokas*
*Chapter 1994(4): 19 shlokas*
*Chapter 1995(5): 54 shlokas*

*In the 18-parva classification, Svargarohana Parva is the 18th. In the 100-parva classification, Svargarohana Parva consists of Section 95 alone. It is the last Parva of the Mahabharata.* Svarga *means heaven and* arohana *means ascent. Thus, Svargarohana Parva is about the ascent to heaven. Yudhishthira is shown hell and then goes to heaven. In the numbering of the chapters in Svargarohana Parva, the first number is a consecutive one, starting with the beginning of the Mahabharata. And the second number, within brackets, is the numbering of the chapter within Svargarohana Parva.*

# Chapter 1991(1)

Janamejaya said, 'My great grandfathers obtained heaven, the abode of the gods. What regions did the sons of Pandu and the sons of Dhritarashtra obtain? I wish to hear about this. It is my view that you know everything. You have obtained the permission of maharshi Vyasa, who was wonderful in his deeds.'

Vaishampayana replied, 'Your great-grandfathers, Yudhishthira and the others, obtained heaven, the abode of the gods. Listen to what they did. Having reached heaven, the abode of the gods, Dharmaraja Yudhishthira saw Duryodhana seated on a seat, blazing in prosperity. He was as resplendent as the sun and was covered with auspicious marks that distinguish heroes. He was with other shining gods and *sadhyas*, the performers of auspicious deeds. On seeing Duryodhana, Yudhishthira was filled with intolerance. Having seen Suyodhana's prosperity, he violently retreated and spoke these words. "I do not desire to be with Duryodhana. He lacked far-sightedness and was greedy for the worlds. It was because of him that we had to kill all the well-wishers and relatives on earth. Earlier, he had made us suffer in the great forest. Our wife, Panchali, was devoted to dharma and without a blemish in her limbs. In the presence of our elders, he oppressed Droupadi in the midst of the assembly hall. O gods! Grant me peace. I do not even wish to see Suyodhana. I wish to go to the region where my brothers are." Narada laughed and replied, "It is not like that. O Indra among kings! For those who reside in heaven, all enmity is destroyed. O Yudhishthira! O mighty-armed one! Do not speak in this way about King Duryodhana. Listen to my words. This King Duryodhana is worshipped, together with the gods, by the virtuous ones, the best among kings and all those who reside in heaven. Having offered his own body as an oblation in the battle, he has obtained the world meant for heroes. All of you were the equals of the gods and encountered him in the battle. By practising the dharma of kshatriyas, he has obtained this region. Confronted with great fear, this lord of the earth was not terrified. O son! You should no longer remember what occurred in the course of the gambling match. You should not think about Droupadi's affliction. Nor should you remember the hardships others caused at the time of the gambling match. Nor should you remember what happened elsewhere, in the course of the battle. You should follow propriety and meet King Duryodhana. O lord of men! There is no enmity in heaven." Having been addressed by Narada, the intelligent Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, asked about his brothers and spoke these words. "Duryodhana was ignorant about dharma. He was wicked and destroyed the earth and his well-wishers. Yet, he has obtained the eternal world meant for heroes. It is because of him that the earth was destroyed, with its horses, chariots and elephants. It is because of him that we burnt with rage and were goaded towards enmity. My brave brothers were great-souled and great in their vows. They were valiant and truthful in speech and abided by truthful pledges. Which are the worlds they have obtained? I desire to see those. What about the great-souled Karna Kounteya, devoted to the truth? What about Dhrishtadyumna, Satyaki and Dhrishtadyumna's sons? What worlds have been obtained by the kings who followed the dharma of kshatriyas and were slain by weapons in the battle? O brahmana! O Narada! Why don't I see those kings here? What about

Virata, Drupada, the foremost Dhrishtaketu, Panchala Shikhandi, all the sons of Droupadi and the unassailable Abhimanyu? O Narada! I wish to see them."'

## Chapter 1992(2)

'Yudhishthira said, "O gods! I do not see the infinitely energetic Radheya.[1] Nor do I see the great-souled brothers, Yudhamanyu and Uttamouja. Those maharathas also offered their bodies as oblations in the battle. In my cause, there are kings and princes who were slain in the battle. Where are all those maharathas, like tigers in their valour? Have those supreme men conquered other worlds? O gods! If all those maharathas have obtained this world, know that only in that case will I reside here, with those great-souled ones. If those kings have not obtained this eternal and auspicious world, then I do not desire to reside here, without my kin and my brothers. On hearing my mother's words, I performed the final water rites for Karna. She asked me to offer oblations of water to him. O gods! I am repeatedly tormented by this. I noticed that the infinitely energetic one's feet resembled those of my mother's. Despite this, I did not follow Karna, the destroyer of enemy forces. Had we been with Karna, even Shakra would have been unable to vanquish us in battle. I wish to go to the place where I can see the son of the sun. Since I did not know who he was, he was slain by Savyasachi. I loved Bhima, terrible in valour, more than my own life. Arjuna was like Indra and the twins were like the Ashvins. I wish to see Panchali, the one who followed dharma. I do not wish to remain here. I am telling you this truthfully. O supreme among gods! Without my brothers, what will I do with heaven? The place where they are is like heaven. It is my view that this is not heaven."

'The gods replied, "O son! We follow the instructions of the king of the gods and will do what brings you pleasure. If you really wish to go there, we will instantly take you there."'

Vaishampayana continued, 'O scorcher of enemies! Having said this, the gods instructed the messenger of the gods. "Show Yudhishthira his well-wishers." O tiger among kings! The messenger of the gods and the king who was Kunti's son went together to the place where those bulls among men were. The messenger of the gods went on ahead and the king followed at the back. That was an inauspicious and inaccessible path, frequented by the performers of wicked deeds. It was enveloped by terrible darkness and was covered with hair, moss and lichen. There was the scent of the performers of wicked deeds and the mire was made out of flesh and blood. It was populated by gnats, crickets, flies and mosquitoes. There were corpses on every side and the stench of carcasses, here and there. It was full of bone and hair and infested by worms and insects. From all sides, a blazing fire surrounded it. There were crows and vultures, with beaks that were like iron. Their mouths were like needles. There were piles of ghosts, as large as the Vindhya mountain. There were dead bodies covered with fat and blood, with arms, thighs and hands severed and stomachs and feet sliced off. The corpses emitted a vile and inauspicious scent and the body hair stood up. The king, with dharma in his soul, advanced along this and he thought a lot. He saw rivers filled with boiling water, extremely difficult to traverse. There were forests with leaves that were like sharp swords and razors. The place was spread with heated sand and there were rocks that were made out iron. In every direction, there were iron pots, with concoctions made out of boiling oil. There were cotton plants that were difficult

to touch, with sharp thorns. Kounteya witnessed the pains that the performers of evil deeds had to undergo.

'Noticing the vile stench, he spoke to the messenger of the gods. "How far must we progress in this fashion? Where are my brothers? You should explain that to me. What place of the gods is this? I wish to know that." Hearing what Dharmaraja had said, the messenger of the gods stopped. He said, "You must go on. The residents of heaven have told me that I must return from here. O Indra among kings! However, if you are exhausted, you need not go on." Yudhishthira was distressed and senseless with the stench. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Having made up his mind to return, he started to retreat. The one with dharma in his soul was overcome with sorrow and grief and started to return. He then heard distressed voices speaking in every direction. "O one who knows about dharma! O rajarshi! O one who has a sacred birth! O Pandava! Show us your favours and stay here for an instant. O unassailable one! Because of your arrival, an auspicious breeze has begun to blow. O father![2] It bears your fragrance and fills us with happiness. O Partha! O bull among men! O supreme among kings! It has been a long time and we are delighted that we have met you. O mighty-armed one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Remain here for a short while. O Kouravya! While you are here, our pain is restricted." There were many such distressed words, full of pain. O king! In that spot, he heard such voices from every direction. Hearing their words, he was distressed and filled with compassion. Yudhishthira remained there and exclaimed, "This is terrible suffering." He heard those words repeatedly and these seemed to be voices he had heard before. They were full of pain and suffering, but Pandava did not recognize them.

'Unable to understand, Yudhishthira, Dharma's son, spoke these words. "Who are you and why are you here?" Having been thus addressed, all of them replied from every direction. "O lord! I am Karna. I am Bhimasena. I am Arjuna. I am Nakula. I am Sahadeva. I am Dhrishtadyumna. I am Droupadi. We are Droupadi's sons." These were the voices that were raised. O king! In that place, he heard such words. The king wondered, "What kind of contrary destiny is this? What tainted deeds have these great-souled ones, Karna, Droupadi's sons and the slender-waisted Panchali, performed? Why are they in this extremely terrible place, with the fetid scent? All of them are the performers of good deeds and I do not know of any wicked deeds that they have performed. What has Dhritarashtra's son, King Suyodhana, done? With all his wicked followers, he is full of prosperity. His prosperity is like that of the great Indra and he is extremely revered. What perversity has led to these people going to hell? All of them are brave and learned about dharma. They have been devoted to truth and the sacred texts. They were devoted to the dharma of kshatriyas. They were wise. They performed sacrifices and gave away a large quantity of gifts. Am I asleep or awake? Am I conscious or unconscious? Perhaps there is a defect in my consciousness. Perhaps my consciousness is deluded." Thus, King Yudhishthira pondered in many ways. He was overcome by sorrow and grief. Because of such thoughts, his senses became anxious. The king who was Dharma's son was filled with great rage. Yudhishthira censured the gods and dharma. Tormented by the terrible stench, he addressed the messenger of the gods. "O fortunate one! Go to those who have sent you as a messenger. I will not go to them. Go and tell them that I will remain here. O messenger! I will be happy with my brothers here." The messenger was thus addressed by Pandu's intelligent son. He went

to the place where Shatakratu, the king of the gods, was, and told him what Dharmaraja desired. O lord of men! He also told him everything that Dharma's son had said.'

## Chapter 1993(3)

Vaishampayana said, 'O Kouravya! Partha Yudhishthira Dharmaraja had remained there only for a short while. With Shakra at the forefront, all the gods arrived there. In embodied form, Dharma also presented himself, to see the king. He came to the spot where Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, was. The bodies of the gods dazzled. Their births and deeds were auspicious. O king! When they arrived, the darkness was dispelled. The pain of the evildoers could no longer be seen there. The river Vaitarani, the thorny shalmali trees, the iron pots and the terrible mountains also vanished. In every direction, King Kounteya had seen malformed bodies. These also disappeared. An auspicious breeze began to blow. It was pleasant to the touch and bore fragrant scents. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! Since the gods had arrived, it was extremely cool too. The immensely energetic king, Dharma's son, was at the spot. With Shakra, the Maruts, the Vasus, the Ashvins, the Sadhyas, the Rudras, the Adityas, all the other residents of heaven, the Siddhas and the supreme rishis arrived there.

'Shakra, lord of the gods, was extremely prosperous. He comforted Yudhishthira and spoke these words to him. 'O Yudhishthira! O mighty-armed one! The large numbers of gods are delighted with you. Come. O tiger among men! Come. O lord! You have obtained success. O king! You have obtained the eternal worlds. You should not have any anger. Listen to my words. O son![3] There is no doubt that all the kings must see hell. O bull among men! There are accumulations of good and bad deeds. A person who enjoys the good deeds earlier, goes to hell later. A person who goes to hell first, enjoys heaven later. A person who has committed many wicked deeds may enjoy heaven first. O king! It is with your benefit in mind that I sent you there first.[4] In connection with his son, you deceived Drona through a falsehood.[5] O king! Because of that falsehood, you had to see hell. You also saw Bhima, Partha,[6] the twins and Krishna Droupadi, as if they had gone to hell. However, that was an act of deceit. O tiger among men! Come. You have been freed from your sin. There are kings on your side who have been killed in the battle. O tiger among men! They have all gone to heaven. Come and see them. The great archer, Karna, was supreme among those who wielded all kinds of weapons. You are tormented on his account. But he has obtained supreme success. O lord! Look at that tiger among men, the son of the sun. He has obtained his own station. O mighty-armed one! O bull among men! Conquer your grief. Look at your other brothers and the kings who were on your side. They have obtained their respective stations. Get rid of this mental fever. O Kourava! Initially, you suffered some kinds of hardship. Be without sorrow now and without disease. Pleasure yourself with me. O son! You have yourself conquered these worlds through your auspicious deeds and austerities. O mighty-armed one! O Pandava! You have obtained the fruits of your donations. The gods, the gandharvas and the divine apsaras, attired in sparkling garments, will serve you now and ensure your comfort in heaven. You have conquered the worlds through the royal sacrifice and it has been extended through the horse sacrifice. O mighty-armed one! You have obtained the great fruits of austerities. O Yudhishthira! Your

worlds are above those of kings. O Partha! They are like those of Harishchandra. Pleasure yourself there. You will sport there like rajarshi Mandhata, King Bhagiratha and Bharata, Dushhanta's son. O Partha! This sacred and divine river[7] purifies the three worlds. O Indra among kings! Go and bathe in Akashaganga.[8] Having bathed there, you will be freed from your human attributes. You will be without sorrow and without effort. You will be freed from all enmity." Indra of the gods spoke in this way to Yudhishthira, Indra among the Kouravas.

'In his personified form, Dharma himself spoke to his son. "O king! O immensely wise one! O son! I am pleased with you, because of your devotion towards me, your truthfulness in speech, your forgiving nature and your self-control. O king! This was the third test I devised for you. O Partha! But whatever be the reason, you are incapable of being dislodged from your nature. Earlier, I came before you and tested you in Dvaitavana, when you were searching for the kindling wood. But you passed that. O descendant of the Bharata lineage! O son! Assuming the form of a dog, I again tested you when your brothers and Droupadi died. This was the third, when you wished to remain here, for the sake of your brothers. O immensely fortunate one! You are pure. Be happy. Be cleansed of sin. O Partha! O lord of the earth! Your brothers are not in hell. This was arranged by me and by the great Indra, the king of the gods. O son! There is no doubt that all the kings must see hell. Therefore, for a short while, you faced supreme unhappiness. O king! However, Savyasachi, Bhima, the twins, bulls among men, and Karna, brave and truthful in speech, do not deserve to be in hell for a long period of time. O Yudhishthira! Nor does the princess Krishna deserve to be in hell. Come. O best among the Bharata lineage! See Ganga, which flows in the three worlds." Your great grandfather, the rajarshi, was addressed in this way. With Dharma and the other gods, he went to their abode. The sacred and divine river Ganga purifies everything and is praised by the rishis. The king bathed there and gave up his human body. Dharmaraja Yudhishthira assumed a divine form. Having bathed in those waters, he was without enmity and without torment. Surrounded by the gods, the intelligent Yudhishthira, king of the Kurus, left with them and with Dharma, praised by the maharshis.'

## Chapter 1994(4)

Vaishampayana said, 'King Yudhishthira was praised by the gods, the rishis and the Maruts and went to where the bulls among the Kurus were. He saw Govinda, in his form of the brahman. This had not been seen earlier and nothing like this had been recognized before. He blazed in his own form and celestial weapons presented themselves, in personified forms. There was the celestial chakra and other terrible weapons, all in embodied forms. He was being worshipped by the brave Phalguna, also in an extremely radiant form. Karna, supreme among the wielders of weapons, was in a different spot. The descendant of the Kuru lineage saw him with the twelve Adityas. In yet another place, the lord saw Bhima with a handsome body, surrounded by a large number of Maruts. The descendant of the Kuru lineage saw Nakula and Sahadeva in the region of the Ashvins, blazing in their own energy. He saw Panchali, garlanded in lotuses and lilies. She had reached heaven and was there, as radiant as the rays of the sun. Suddenly, King Yudhishthira wished to question her. But the illustrious Indra, the king of the gods, spoke to him. "Shri assumed the form of Droupadi and was

born as a human. O Yudhishthira! She was not born from anyone's womb.[9] She was loved by the worlds and her body had an auspicious fragrance. She was born in Drupada's lineage and served all of you. The wielder of the trident[10] created her for your pleasure. These five immensely fortunate gandharvas are like the fire in their radiance. O king! These infinitely energetic ones were the sons that you and Droupadi had. Behold the king of the gandharvas. He was the learned Dhritarashtra. Know that he was your father's elder brother. This is Kounteya, your elder brother, and like the fire in radiance. He was the son of the sun. He was the first and the foremost and was famous as Radheya. O bull among men! Behold. He moves around with Aditya. O Indra among kings! Behold the large numbers of Sadhyas, gods, Vasus and Maruts. The maharatha Vrishnis and Andhakas are in their midst. Satyaki was the foremost among the brave Bhoja maharathas. Behold Subhadra's unvanquished son with the moon. Abhimanyu, the great archer, possesses the radiance of the moon. Pandu, the great archer, is now with Kunti and Madri. On a celestial vehicle, your father often comes to see me. Behold. King Bhishma, Shantanu's son, is with the Vasus. Listen. Your preceptor, Drona, is next to Brihaspati. O Pandava! There were other kings and warriors on your side. They are now with the gandharvas, yakshas and other auspicious people. Some of the best kings have obtained the status of guhyakas. Sacred in their speech, intelligence and deeds, they have given up their bodies and conquered heaven."'

## Chapter 1995(5)

Janamejaya asked, 'The great-souled Bhishma and Drona, King Dhritarashtra, Virata, Drupada, Shankha, Uttara, Dhrishtaketu, Jayatsena, King Satyajit, Duryodhana's sons, Shakuni Soubala, Karna's brave sons, King Jayadratha, Ghatotkacha and the others whom you have not mentioned, other kings who were blazing in their forms and whom you have named—how long did they dwell in heaven? Tell me about that. O supreme among brahmanas! Was their stay there for an eternal period? When the fruits of their deeds were extinguished, what ends were obtained by those bulls among men? O brahmana! I wish to hear about this. You should tell me about it.' 'Suta said, "Thus addressed, the brahmana rishi took the permission of the great-souled Vyasa.[11] He sought to explain to the king."'

Vaishampayana said, 'O lord of men! When the fruits of deeds are extinguished, everyone has to leave. O king! O bull among the Bharata lineage! Listen to a divine mystery. He[12] was powerful, possessed great energy and had divine insight. O Kouravya! The sage who was Parashara's son was ancient and was great in his vows. He was fathomless in his intelligence and knew everything. He knew the end of all kinds of deeds. The greatly energetic and immensely radiant Bhishma became a Vasu. O bull among the Bharata lineage! The eight Vasus can now be seen.[13] Drona, supreme among the Angiras lineage, entered Brihaspati. Hardikya Kritavarma entered the Maruts. Pradyumna entered Sanatkumara, which is where he had come from. Dhritarashtra obtained the world of the lord of riches, which is so difficult to obtain. The illustrious Gandhari went with Dhritarashtra. With his wives, Pandu went to the great Indra's abode. Virata, Drupada, King Dhrishtaketu, Nishatha,[14] Akrura, Bhanu, Kampa, Viduratha, Bhurishrava, Shala, King Bhuri, Ugrasena, Kamsa, the valiant Vasudeva,[15] Uttara, his brother Shankha, bull among men—all these supreme men entered specific divinities.

Soma[16] had a powerful and immensely energetic son named Varcha. He was born as Phalguna's son, Abhimanyu, lion among men. He followed the dharma of kshatriyas and fought the way no man ever has. On the completion of his deeds, the maharatha, with dharma in his soul, entered Soma. O bull among men! Karna entered his father, the sun. Shakuni entered *dvapara*[17] and Dhrishtadyumna the fire. All of Dhritarashtra's sons became yatudhanas,[18] intoxicated with their valour. They were powerful and great-souled. Purified by weapons, they went to heaven. Kshatta[19] and King Yudhishthira entered Dharma. Ananta, the illustrious god,[20] entered the nether regions. Instructed by his grandfather, he holds up the entire earth through his yoga. O Janamejaya! When the time came, Vasudeva's[21] sixteen thousand wives submerged themselves in the Sarasvati. They were then transformed into apsaras and presented themselves before Vasudeva. There were other brave maharathas, Ghatotkacha and the others, who were slain in the great war. All of them became gods and yakshas. Duryodhana's aides have been spoken of as rakshasas. O king! In due course, they obtained all the supreme worlds. Those bulls among men went to the regions of the great Indra, the intelligent Kubera or Varuna. O immensely radiant one! O descendant of the Bharata lineage! I have recounted all this in detail, including the entire character of the Kurus and the Pandavas.'

'Suta said, "O best among brahmanas! At appropriate gaps during the sacrificial ceremony, King Janamejaya heard all this and was filled with wonder. The officiating priests completed all the tasks that remained to be done. Astika was delighted at the serpents having been saved.[22] The king honoured all the brahmanas and gratified them with dakshina. They returned to wherever they had come from. Having taken his leave from the brahmanas, King Janamejaya left Takshashila and returned to Gajasahvya.[23] On Vyasa's command, Vaishampayana recounted all this at the king's snake sacrifice and I have told you everything about it. This is known as a sacred history. It is supreme and auspicious. It has been composed by the brahmana sage, Krishna, truthful in speech. He knew everything. He knew all the rites. He was virtuous and possessed knowledge about dharma. His senses were extraordinary and pure. He cleansed his soul with austerities. He possessed the powers associated with those who know sankhya and yoga. He saw all this with his divine sight and used his intelligence to compose it in a single strand. He wished to spread the deeds of the great-souled Pandavas in the world and also those of the other kshatriyas, who were rich in their great energy. If a learned person hears this on auspicious and festive occasions, his soul is cleansed. He conquers heaven and advances to the brahman. If a person seats himself at the feet of brahmanas and hears this at a funeral ceremony, his ancestors always obtain infinite amounts of food and drink. During the day, one may commit sins with one's senses and with one's mind. However, subsequently, if one listens to the Mahabharata in the evening, one is freed from one's sins. O bull among the Bharata lineage! Everything about dharma, artha, kama and moksha can be found here. What is here can be found elsewhere. But what is not here cannot be found elsewhere. Those who desire prosperity should hear the history known as Jaya, irrespective of whether they are kings, the sons of kings, or pregnant women. A person who desires heaven obtains heaven. A person who desires victory obtains victory. An expectant woman obtains a son. A maiden becomes extremely fortunate. For the sake of ensuring dharma, the lord Krishna Dvaipayana, who will not return, composed a summary known as Bharata and it took him three years. Narada recited it to the gods, Asita-Devala to the ancestors, Shuka to rakshasas and yakshas and Vaishampayana to mortals. This history is sacred. It is deep in meaning and

is as revered as the Vedas. With brahmanas as the foremost, it should be heard by the three varnas. O Shounaka! A man who does this is freed from sin and obtains fame. There is no doubt that he advances towards supreme success. If one faithfully studies the sacred Mahabharata, or even if one studies one quarter of it, one is purified and all one's sins are destroyed. In ancient times, the illustrious maharshi, Vyasa, composed this. The illustrious one made his son, Shuka, study it, with these four shlokas. 'Thousands of mothers and fathers and hundreds of sons and wives arrive in this world and then depart elsewhere. There are thousands of reasons for joy and hundreds of reasons for fear. From one day to another, they afflict those who are stupid, but not those who are learned. I am without pleasure and have raised my arms, but no one is listening to me. If dharma and kama result from artha, why should one not pursue artha? For the sake of kama, fear or avarice, and even for the sake of preserving one's life, one should not give up dharma. Dharma is eternal. Happiness and unhappiness are transient. The atman is eternal, but other reasons are transient.' If a person awakes in the morning and reads Bharata, which is like the savitri, he obtains the fruits of reading the Bharata and obtains the supreme brahman. The illustrious ocean and the Himalaya mountain are stores of riches. The famous Bharata is said to be like that. If a person controls himself and reads the account of the Mahabharata, there is no doubt that he advances towards supreme success. This is immeasurable and emerged from the lips of Dvaipayana. It is auspicious and sacred. It is pure and removes all sin. If a person controls himself and listens to Bharata being recited, there is no need for him to sprinkle himself with water from Pushkara."'

*This ends Svargarohana Parva and also ends the Mahabharata.*

# Footnotes

## Introduction

[1]Brahmana is a text and also the word used for the highest caste.

[2]A class of religious and philosophical texts that are composed in the forest, or are meant to be studied when one retires to the forest.

[3]The six Vedangas are *shiksha* (articulation and pronunciation), *chhanda* (prosody), *vyakarana* (grammar), *nirukta* (etymology), *jyotisha* (astronomy) and *kalpa* (rituals).

[4]Religion, duty.

[5]Wealth. But in general, any object of the senses.

[6]Desire.

[7]Release from the cycle of rebirth.

[8]Anukramanika is sometimes called Anukramani.

[9]Krishna or Krishnaa is another name for Droupadi.

Section Eighty-Seven

# *Dana Dharma Parva*

[1]Jnana is knowledge one learns from one's teachers or from the sacred texts. Vijnana is a special type of jnana and is knowledge one picks up through introspection, meditation and self-realization.

[2]A vow of udvasa can mean a life of exile, or it can mean a vow where a person does not wear any clothes.

[3]There were eight forms of marriage. In the brahma form, the father chooses an appropriate groom and bestows the ornamented daughter on him.

[4]Brown.

[5]Seven generations above and seven generations below.

[6]This grandfather can only mean Brahma. It is possible that it is meant to be outside quotes, in which case it can refer to Bhishma.

[7]When a giver donates something, he receives the same kind of reward in return, whether in this life or in the next. How does this happen?

[8]As quid pro quo, expecting gifts.

[9]Donate to them, so that they don't make you suffer.

[10]Due to gods and ancestors.

[11]As compared to brahmanas.

[12]Brahmanas.

[13]This is not quite accurately worded. The first two sacrifices are to the gods and the ancestors, the third one is for the Vishvadevas.

[14]The word used is *tata*.

[15]This seems to be the choice between slaughter of animals at sacrifices and donations.

[16]Meaning Prajapati.

[17]They are not liked. Hence they don't have clients.

[18]In the next life.

[19]Yoga means getting what has not been obtained. Kshema means protecting what has been obtained.

[20]Something that is agreeable in the act of giving, both to the giver and to the receiver.

[21]Parashurama.

[22]The earth.

[23]In either direction, both ancestors and descendants.

[24]The fire god.

[25]Shiva.

[26]Born from wombs, born from eggs, born from sweat and plants and trees.

[27]Of his lineage, ancestors, as well as descendants.

[28]The text has a break in continuity. The givers of land obtain the same fruits as the kings who die in the field of battle.

[29]Shvapaka means dog-eater or someone who cooks food for dogs. This is usually equated with *chandala* or outcaste.

[30]That is, he is a stranger.

[31]Whether one gives for the merits, or regardless of the merits.

[32]Meaning the following of the brahman.

[33]Vasumati is another name for the earth and means the one who is full of riches.

[34]There are twenty-seven nakshatras, which are stars/constellations.

[35]Rice mixed with milk and sugar.

[36]Another name for Mrigashira.

[37]Krisara is made out of wheat flour, rice and sesamum.

[38]Actually, the text mentions a special kind of rice known as *shashtika*.

[39]Kind of bean, commonly known as *rajma.*

[40]This doesn't belong and is clearly an error.

[41]January-February.

[42]Sage associated with the Krishna Yajur Veda and the *Kalpasutras*. Shankha and Likhita have been mentioned in Section 84 (Volume 8).

[43]Ancestors and descendants.

[44]Today's Chambal river.

[45]Another name for the month of Kartika, October'November.

[46]While it is not clear from the text, this seems to be a Savitri quote.

[47]This incident has been described in Section 33 (Volume 3).

[48]Sudha has multiple meanings. It is best taken here as nectar.

[49]The river is Yamuna, the mountain is Yaamuna.

[50]Yama's messenger.

[51]Sharmina's.

[52]Yama.

[53]This brahmana's lifespan wasn't yet over and he had been wrongly brought to Yama, instead of Sharmina.

[54]Once they are dead. Yama cannot determine the time of death.

[55]Implicitly, brahmanas must be invited to his house and offered sesamum.

[56]The brahmana.

[57]Having conquered the earth first.

[58]Other than a kshatriya.

[59]This requires explanation. The word *go* means speech, the earth and cow. Hence, all three have the same name. Brahmi means holy or divine and Brahmi Sarasvati is holy speech, or the teachings of the Vedas. Teaching this to a disciple is like donating speech.

[60]At least three sons are required before a person can be said to have sons.

[61]To the donor.

[62]Nriga died.

[63]Measure of distance, between two and three miles. Originally, a yojana was a distance that could be travelled by one yoking of horses to a chariot.

[64]Gift due to a guest.

[65]The word used is tata.
[66]This can happen if the recipient isn't worthy.
[67]Calves of cows owned.
[68]Through arms.
[69]The eighth lunar day (*ashtami*), regarded as prosperous and desirable (*kamya*).
[70]Go means cow and the word also means one particular ray of the sun, known as *sushumna*.
[71]The choice of an appropriate preceptor is the first ordinance.
[72]The world of cows. Also, Krishna's heaven.
[73]Through yoga.
[74]Not store anything.
[75]That for a brahmana is not at all clear. Perhaps the preceding sentence means that it lasts one hundred years for a brahmana.
[76]A slightly unusual name for Indra, since it is more common in Buddhist literature.
[77]In the next life.
[78]In hell. Hair means hair on the cow's body.
[79]Brahma.
[80]We have translated *vrata* as vow and *niyama* as ritual. Both are principles of observance and conduct. However, there is a sense of worship in the former, missing in the latter. A vrata can also be a specific case of a niyama.
[81]The ordinances.
[82]Rohini originally meant a red cow, though later, it came to be applied to all good cows.
[83]Samanga means one with all the limbs intact. Bahula means large, but the word also means a cow.
[84]Like lying down on the ground.
[85]Cows.
[86]Though not explicitly indicated, these are words the donor is speaking.
[87]Probably the two sentences that begin with, 'Through my mind ...'
[88]This shloka is unclear and we have taken liberties.
[89]Yet another cryptic shloka. Entry is presumably in heaven and years is implicit. One can deduce that thirty-six thousand years is for cattle, eight thousand for garments and twenty thousand for gold.
[90]A cryptic shloka again. The donor of equivalent objects obtains the benefits only when the recipient has taken eight steps homewards.
[91]Havya is oblations offered to the gods. Kavya means offerings to the wise and represents oblations offered to the ancestors.
[92]This means Brihaspati.
[93]Because sacrifices would be performed.
[94]Meaning Daksha.
[95]The mother of all cows. There are alternative stories about creation. In other stories, Surabhi is the daughter of the sage Kashyapa and Daksha's daughter, Rohini.
[96]Daksha.
[97]After the calves had drunk the milk.
[98]The lord of animals.
[99]The one with the sign of a bull.

[100]Resin of the *guggul* tree.
[101]Interpreted as voluntary and involuntary.
[102]The next sentence clarifies that these prayers are being addressed to Brahma.
[103]Cows.
[104]Soudasa.
[105]Of cows.
[106]Act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.
[107]Flower of the *kalpavriksha*, one of the five trees in Indra's garden.
[108]There are inconsistencies here, and in what follows. Vyasa is actually speaking to Shuka, though it is being reported by Bhishma to Yudhishthira.
[109]Tthese are names for cows. Yugandhara is the bearer of a plough, Surupa is beautiful in form, Bahurupa is with many forms, Vishvarupa is with the universe as a form and Matara is mother.
[110]The text uses the word *gomati*, which means a place that has a lot of cattle. But the text also seems to use the word in the sense of a specific mantra. As a mantra, it probably means a cluster of mantras from the *samhita* section of the Vedas.
[111]The gomati mantra.
[112]The goddess of wealth and prosperity.
[113]Meaning Varuna.
[114]To earth.
[115]The word used is tata.
[116]The mother of the gods.
[117]Aditi.
[118]Later, in the night.
[119]Vasishtha has already talked about the superiority of gold, but the Critical Edition has excised those shlokas.
[120]One who holds up his seed.
[121]Pavaka is Agni's name and Pavaki is Agni's son. Pavaki is thus a name for Skanda.
[122]Through the strength of asceticism and the granters of boons are the gods.
[123]Vasishtha is telling Parashurama the story.
[124]Agni hid in the water. Since fire originates in water, water is like the fire's own self.
[125]By rubbing two pieces of shami wood together, the wood is easily ignited.
[126]The word used is tata.
[127]Through Shiva's seed, which Agni was carrying.
[128]The fire.
[129]The one with the golden seed.
[130]The one with riches or wealth, because the embryo, associated with gold, was deposited on the earth.
[131]The Pleiades.
[132]*Skanna* means to trickle down or fall down. *Guha* means to be reared secretly.
[133]A name for gold, something that assumes a form after it has been born.
[134]Performed on the thirteenth *tithi* of *krishnapaksha* in the month of Chaitra (March–April).

[135]Nigraha and pragraha are about rules of grammar. Nigraha is for vowels to which rules of *sandhi* apply. Pragraha is for vowels to which rules of *sandhi* do not apply.
[136]Representing knowledge.
[137]The crackling sound of the fire.
[138]Angara means coal or charcoal. The sense is that Angiras was born from coal that was still burning, while Kavi was born from coal that had got extinguished.
[139]The rays of the fire.
[140]Agni's.
[141]For the fire.
[142]The stars and the planets.
[143]Agni.
[144]The master of the household, in the sense that he is the one who undertakes a sacrifice.
[145]Bhrigu, Angiras and Kavi.
[146]Shiva.
[147]The right to the offspring.
[148]Brahma.
[149]Perhaps because everything followed the varuni sacrifice.
[150]Shiva.
[151]For any transgressions.
[152]That is, the evening.
[153]Gold.
[154]Gold.
[155]This is probably a typo in the Critical Edition. It should read Yama.
[156]In their personified forms.
[157]Garuda.
[158]Surabhi.
[159]The text has Ila in the feminine. While Ila has several usages, here it probably means Budha's wife.
[160]Vishnu.
[161]Skanda.
[162]Pavaka's son, Skanda.
[163]Before worshipping the gods.
[164]Krishnapaksha is superior to shuklapaksha.
[165]The spotted antelope. Ruru is another kind of antelope.
[166]The *gayal* or *mithun.*
[167]We haven't glossed over this in the translation. The text doesn't say meat, it says product.
[168]Probably a large bird.
[169]January–February.
[170]We have taken a liberty. The text literally translates as, under the shadow of an elephant (*hasti*). This doesn't seem to make any sense. We have thus taken hasti as Hasta.
[171]Famous king.
[172]Shatabhisha.
[173]The same as Bhadrapada.

[174]At a funeral ceremony, when brahmanas are fed, they are seated along a row or line. Those who are inferior are not allowed to sit together with the others and sit separately. They are effectively outcasts among brahmanas.

[175]Alternatively, one who neglects his duties.

[176]Alternatively, one who earns a living by selling weapons.

[177]Alternatively, blind.

[178]Seated along the same row.

[179]At a funeral ceremony.

[180]Different types of demons.

[181]The line for eating the food, not the lineage.

[182]Yama taught Nachiketa about the sacrificial fire. The three probably refers to the three days he waited in Yama's house and the three boons he obtained from Yama. Every act in a funeral ceremony is performed thrice. The sutra literature suggests that this should be understood as the three texts that talk about the Nachiketa fire.

[183]Probably meaning three specific verses with the word Suparna.

[184]Specific name of a Sama hymn.

[185]While this clearly refers to the Atharva Veda, many *Atharvashirasa* texts are of much later vintage.

[186]Measure of distance. There are four kroshas in a yojana, but the length of a yojana varies.

[187]This means eating together. It is difficult to understand what it means in the present context. It probably means the polluting and the non-polluting eating together, in the same line.

[188]The gifts or dakshina.

[189]This could also be millet.

[190]Because, under the prevailing ordinances, funeral ceremonies were performed by sons for fathers, not by fathers for sons.

[191]Divinities who subsist on the heat of the fire.

[192]Both are of inferior varieties.

[193]Onions are mentioned twice.

[194]A small variety of onion or garlic. Alternatively, a turnip.

[195]A kind of pot-herb.

[196]Pastries made of minced meat.

[197]Implying mixed birth.

[198]A brahmana who becomes a rakshasa.

[199]Not directly belonging to the family and of course, those who are dead.

[200]Alternatively, speckled with black.

[201]Though this act is against the vow.

[202]In excess, or in a figurative sense.

[203]After the guests and the servants have eaten. This is regarded as amrita.

[204]Other than at sacrifices.

[205]Vrishadarbha's son.

[206]Vasishtha's wife.

[207]In terms of the demerits.

[208]Vrishadarbhi.

[209]So that the wrong people aren't killed. In addition, the names would provide an indication of their powers.

[210]She had presumably assumed a pleasant form for the king.

[211]The number four is incomprehensible. Speculatively, it might mean the four kinds of creatures—born from wombs, born from eggs, born from sweat and plants and herbs.

[212]As a consequence of food not being available.

[213]Kind of deer.

[214]A translation can't capture the etymology—*trayate* (save, with a root in *tra*), *tri* (thrice) and *ratri* (night).

[215]Wealth means the wealth of austerities and the word for wealth is *vasu*. Similarly, *vasati* (with a root in *vas*) means residence/house as a noun and to reside as a verb. The word for foremost is Varishtha and this is somewhat forced.

[216]*Kupa* is the post to which a boat or ship is moored and *kupapa* is the sun.

[217]*Bhara* means maintain/support. *Avyaja* means easily, without deceit.

[218]Go means the earth or sky and *dama* is self-restraint. Quite forced, *dhuma* is smoke.

[219]*Vishva* means universe and *mitra* means friend.

[220]The derivation of Jamadagni's name is extremely difficult to understand. *Jajama* is to have been born and *ajaja* means one without birth, that is, a god. *Mrija* is purity and *jijavayishati* is to inspire.

[221]*Dharati* is to hold up, while *dharitri/vasundhara* means the earth. *Anu* means to follow and *rundhati* is to slow down, that is, follow gently.

[222]*Ganda* means side of the face or cheek. It also means an elevation or lump, like goitre.

[223]*Sakha* is friend and animal is *pashu.*

[224]Shunasakha means a friend to dogs.

[225]A mendicant carries a staff made up of three sticks joined together.

[226]Instead of guests coming to his house.

[227]If a brahmana lady gives birth to a son who fights, that is not fortunate.

[228]Forbidden meat. A brahmana shouldn't retaliate either.

[229]A mendicant is not supposed to live in a city.

[230]Instead of brahmanas being fed.

[231]This is not an austerity that should be practised in a village.

[232]It being deduced that Indra must have stolen the lotuses.

[233]Jamadagni's wife.

[234]Summer, May–June.

[235]The word used is tata.

[236]Ones born from wombs, eggs, sweat and plants and trees.

[237]The cold season is *hemanta,* between autumn and winter. Winter proper is *shishira.*

[238]*Lata* is a creeper, *valli* is a smaller creeper.

[239]*Suvarna* means gold.

[240]This is a description of flowers.

[241]Such as evil spirits.

[242]Frankincense, *Boswellia serrata.*

[243]Resin of guggul tree, agar wood.

[244]Aloe, kind of agar wood.
[245]Resin of *shala* tree.
[246]Incense.
[247]To save people who have died during dakshinayana.
[248]Interpreted as oil from mustard and castor seeds.
[249]Two kinds of liquor are mentioned, *sura* and *asava*. The former is undistilled, while the latter is distilled.
[250]On the ground.
[251]Nahusha, who had dislodged Indra from his throne.
[252]From Brahma.
[253]Agastya.
[254]Nahusha.
[255]Bhrigu.
[256]A small measure of time, an instant, a twinking, a minute, the time it takes to blink the eye.
[257]A kshatrabandhu is an inferior kshatriya. He is kshatriya in birth, but not in action.
[258]From the stolen cows.
[259]The stolen cows shook their bodies and sprinkled milk on people who were then killed.
[260]The king and the queen.
[261]The name of a specific hell.
[262]The dog was a human in its earlier life.
[263]This is Dhritarashtra, the king of the *nagas*, not the Dhritarashtra who was Duryodhana's father.
[264]Implicitly, Dhritarashtra and Goutama were friends.
[265]Since this is a naga, this is an anomaly.
[266]Yama's.
[267]Rose apple.
[268]Kubera.
[269]Types of Sama hymns.
[270]A reference to Indra.
[271]Of coins.
[272]Respectively, sacrifices that last for one night, five nights and eleven nights.
[273]Chains made out of gold and in the shape of the moon, worn on the head or around the waist.
[274]Sacrifice where cows are slaughtered.
[275]Each brahmana.
[275]There is a typo in the Critical Edition. It says *patnimata*, which makes no sense, *patni* meaning wife. It should probably read *padmini*, she-elephant.
[277]Each brahmana.
[278]A sacrifice was performed. Then a piece of shami wood was hurled, thus measuring out the distance for performing the next sacrifice.
[279]Literally, the path followed by Tura. It is a vow that is a modification of the full moon sacrifice.
[280]Sacrifice for the conquest of the earth.
[281]Shukracharya.
[282]Both of these when seated on the ground.

[283]This is a period of roughly one and a half hours, just before dawn, when the sun is still below the horizon.
[284]Dawn and dusk.
[285]A younger person must not walk ahead of an older person.
[286]The upper garment for the upper part of the body must be worn.
[287]The text doesn't clearly indicate which part is a Yama quote and the quotation marks are thus arbitrary.
[288]This sentence is about a person who follows the norm of permissible sexual intercourse. The earlier sentence is about a person who is always strictly celibate.
[289]The text does not talk about striking another person with a rod. Translated literally, it is about using someone else's rod to strike.
[290]A kind of cake.
[291]Large, round cake.
[292]A stick or piece of wood used to clean the teeth, like a toothbrush.
[293]The wet garment, in an attempt to dry it.
[294]Outside the garments.
[295]In the form of a paste and not those that are dry.
[296]Use the upper garment as a lower one, or the other way around.
[297]The fringe has a lower thread count.
[298]Priyangu is a medicinal plant and perfume, bilva is the wood apple, tagara is a fragrant powder and kesara is saffron, or anything made out of the filament of a flower.
[299]After the festive occasion is over.
[300]With the exception of shanashaka, the others are varieties of the fig tree. Shanashaka is hemp.
[301]This clearly means adding salt over and above what has been used in the cooking.
[302]Other than from the flesh of animals killed at sacrifices.
[303]As the person, that is, they are equal in status.
[304]This is probably a prohibition for the night.
[305]Under the nakshatras Purva Bhadrapada and Uttara Bhadrapada.
[306]That is, gotra.
[307]That is, *sapinda*.
[308]One must wash.
[309]After the householder stage is over, one moves on to subsequent stages of life.
[310]The brothers.
[311]Has not died.
[312]This means the mother, the wife of the father who is dividing up the property.
[313]An acharya is an ordinary teacher. An upadhyaya is a superior teacher, one who teaches the Vedas.
[314]The birth of learning.
[315]They should fast for a single night.
[316]November–December.
[317]December–January.
[318]January–February.
[319]Phalguna, February–March.

[320]March–April.
[321]April–May.
[322]May–June.
[323]June–July.
[324]July–August.
[325]Bhadra, August–September.
[326]Ashvina, September–October.
[327]October–November.
[328]He only eats on the last day of the paksha and fasts on the other days.
[329]*Gana*.
[330]Is reborn on earth.
[331]A sacrifice that lasts for an entire year.
[332]Ornaments worn by women. A kanchi is worn around the waist and a nupura is worn around the ankles.
[333]A padma is a very large number.
[334]A sacrifice that lasts for twelve days.
[335]This requires explanation. The text says 16 + measure of *sharagni*. The god of love has five arrows (*shara)* and there are seven fires. Hence, sharagni is 5 x 7=35. This added to 16 gives 51.
[336]Sacrifice at which cows are slaughtered.
[337]Pataka is an unspecified large number.
[338]A11 of these signify very large numbers of years.
[339]Interpreted as a human sacrifice.
[340]A kalpa is one of Brahma’s days.
[341]A sagara is a very high number.
[342]The sun.
[343]The sun.
[344]Bhishma answers the question figuratively, rather than geographically. This does not mean Lake Manasa. Instead, it means the soul.
[345]After death.
[346]This is the subtle form of the body, the *linga* body.
[347]To their good and bad deeds.
[348]Since the word dharma is used twice, one probably means Dharma or Yama.
[349]After being reborn.
[350]Excluding the mind.
[351]At the time of death.
[352]At the time of conception.
[353]The text is gender neutral.
[354]Obviously a brahmana.
[355]A bird that is like a thrush.
[356]There are one hundred lives as a worm, adding up to fifteen years.
[357]The third is left implicit. By inference, it is greed.
[358]Because he transcends the gods.

[359]This is an oblique way of saying that one should place oneself in the other person's shoes.

[360]The text isn't very smooth. In addition to deeds, words and thoughts, a fourth kind of violence is now added, in terms of eating flesh.

[361]If one tastes meat, an attachment develops for it. Better to not taste it in the first place.

[362]The four Vedas.

[363]Having been killed by someone else.

[364]Kartika.

[365]The text uses the word *sharada*. This is naturally translated as autumn, but that doesn't fit. Though slightly forced, we have taken this as the bright half of the month.

[366]While this is the name of a hell, it also means being cooked in a vessel.

[367]The word for meat is *mamsa*. This explanation is based on *mam* (me) and *sa* (he). He will eat me.

[368]One undertakes acts as some species. One is reborn as that species to face the consequences of those acts.

[369]Vyasa.

[370]Dharma, artha and kama.

[371]A reference to the man having become a worm.

[372]It was crushed to death by the cart.

[373]Clearly a lineage of sages outside the normal mainstream.

[374]The word used is tata.

[375]For example, a person who gives food and drink earns the same merits as a person who undertakes one hundred sacrifices. This is a hyperbole and is also paradoxical.

[376]A brahmana.

[377]Vyasa.

[378]One with austerities and one with learning.

[379]There is a typo and we have corrected it. The text actually says a person who is not a donor.

[380]The principle also applies to gods.

[381]Sumana asked Shandili.

[382]The moon.

[383]Shiva and Parvati.

[384]One with a bull on his banner.

[385]With a lotus in his navel. Vishnu's name.

[386]Vrishabhadhvaja is the same as Vrishadhvaja.

[387]Bhutapati means lord of creatures, or more specifically, the bhutas. Shiva's name.

[388]Parvati.

[389]Shiva. Bhava is also Shiva's name.

[390]There is a pun on *aloka* (light) and *loka* (world).

[391]The name of Shiva's bow.

[392]*Tila* is a tiny particle and *uttama* means excellent.

[393]Brahma.

[394]Pots are broken as part of the funeral ceremony. However, a door (*kapata)* has no role in such a ceremony. If this is a typo, it occurs in non-Critical editions too and should probably be *kapala* (skull).

[395]Fasting is interpreted as restraint of the senses.

[396]Those who are thus twice-born are the first three varnas.

[397]Dharma, artha and kama.

[398]The Rig Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda.

[399]The three rites are donations, studying and performing sacrifices. The three things to be overcome are greed, anger and desire.

[400]Studying, worshipping the gods, worshipping the ancestors, feeding humans and feeding other living creatures.

[401]It is best not to try to translate these. A kutichara is someone who is deceitful in conduct. A kritodaka is someone who has offered oblations of water. Hamsa is a term used for an ascetic and paramahamsa.

[402]The state of paramahamsa.

[403]*Phena* is froth or foam.

[404]Those who roam around in circles.

[405]Samprakshalas wash their vessels every day, so that nothing is saved for the next day. Ashmakuttas are those who only eat grain pounded by stone. Dantolukhalinas use their teeth for grinding the grain.

[406]Respectively, posture meant for heroes and places meant for heroes. The former can be interpreted as *virasana*, while the latter is a desolate spot that only the brave can step foot in.

[407]Four fires on four sides and the sun overhead.

[408]A frog is a *manduka* and this probably means *mandukasana*.

[409]Ceremony in which serpents (naga) are worshipped. Observed on the fifth lunar day *(panchami)* in shuklapaksha in the month of Shravana (July–August).

[410]The suggestion seems to be that these are facades.

[411]Indra's city.

[412]The text translates as near a desert. This is interpreted as avoiding food and drink.

[413]Both of these incidents happened at the time when Shiva destroyed Daksha's sacrifice.

[414]By implication, through birth.

[415]From here onwards, the reference seems to be to a vaishya.

[416]As taxes levied.

[417]Regardless of varna.

[418]In hell.

[419]Pulkasas are same as *pukkasas*.

[420]A brahmana who is reborn as a rakshasa.

[421]Koushika is one of Indra's names.

[422]Meaning Yama.

[423]Kubera's.

[424]Agni.

[425]Most, though not all, rivers are feminine.

[426]The allusion seems to be that Shiva knew the answer, but asked Uma, because of lack of ego.

[427]Uma.

[428]Ganga.

[429]Ganga.
[430]Uma.
[431]The omnipresent one. The text doesn't have the numbering. We have introduced it for convenience. Some of the names can have multiple meanings. The meanings we have given are thus not exhaustive.
[432]Lord of the past, the present and the future.
[433]Creator of all beings.
[434]Upholder of all beings.
[435]One who exists.
[436]One who is the soul of all beings.
[437]One who thinks of all beings.
[438]Pure soul.
[439]Supreme destination for the emancipated.
[440]Immutable.
[441]Supreme being.
[442]Witness.
[443]Without destruction.
[444]Leader of those who know about yoga.
[445]Lord of *pradhana* (equated with *prakriti)* and *purusha.*
[446]With the form of a man-lion, a reference to the *narasimha* incarnation.
[447]Handsome one.
[448]With beautiful hair.
[449]Supreme being.
[450]Everything.
[451]Destroyer of everything.
[452]Auspicious one.
[453]Immobile one.
[454]Origin of beings.
[455]Undecaying treasure.
[456]Source.
[457]One who causes manifestation.
[458]One who supports.
[459]Powerful one.
[460]Lord of all lords.
[461]Benevolent being in the sun.
[462]Lotus-eyed one.
[463]Loud roar.
[464]Without beginning and end.
[465]One who sustains.
[466]One who ordains.
[467]One who is superior to Brahma (interpreted as Dhatri).
[468]Beyond measure.

[469]Lord of the senses.
[470]One with a lotus in the navel.
[471]Lord of the immortals.
[472]Creator of the universe.
[473]The builder.
[474]Broad one.
[475]Ancient one.
[476]Certain one.
[477]One who cannot be grasped.
[478]Eternal one.
[479]Red-eyed.
[480]Destroyer.
[481]Great.
[482]One who has abodes in three points, probably meaning the past, the present and the future. Alternatively, since Trikakubh is Indra's name, one who resides with Indra.
[483]Sacred.
[484]Auspicious.
[485]Supreme.
[486]The splendid lord.
[487]One who grants life.
[488]Life.
[489]Eldest.
[490]Best.
[491]With a golden womb.
[492]With the earth as a womb.
[493]Descendant of Madhu (an ancestor of the Yadavas).
[494]Slayer of Madhu (a demon).
[495]One who strides with valour.
[496]One who wields a bow.
[497]Intelligent one.
[498]One whose progress is full of valour.
[499]Without a superior.
[500]Difficult to assail.
[501]Grateful one.
[502]One who does all the acts himself.
[503]Lord of the gods.
[504]Refuge.
[505]Prosperity.
[506]Seed of the universe.
[507]Creator of subjects.
[508]Day.

[509]Year.
[510]Snake.
[511]Conviction.
[512]One who sees everything.
[513]Without birth.
[514]Lord of everything.
[515]Successful.
[516]Success.
[517]Undecaying origin of everything.
[518]Giant ape.
[519]Immeasurable in soul.
[520]One from whom all kinds of yoga flow.
[521]Riches.
[522]One whose mind is riches.
[523]Truth.
[524]One whose soul is impartial.
[525]One who is revered.
[526]Equable.
[527]Invincible.
[528]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[529]One who is like a bull in his deeds.
[530]One who is like a bull in his form.
[531]Many-headed.
[532]Tawny.
[533]Origin of the universe.
[534]Pure in fame
[535]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[536]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[537]Excellent rider.
[538]Great ascetic.
[539]One who goes everywhere.
[540]Omniscient.
[541]Radiant one.
[542]One whose soldiers can go everywhere.
[543]Afflicter of people.
[544]One who knows the Vedas, with none of their limbs distorted.
[545]Wise one who knows the Vedas.
[546]Supervisor of the worlds.
[547]Supervisor of the gods.
[548]Supervisor of dharma.
[549]What has been done and what has not been done.

[550]With four souls—Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.
[551]With four manifestations.
[552]With four tusks, a reference to the boar incarnation.
[553]Four-armed.
[554]Radiant one.
[555]Food.
[556]One who eats.
[557]Tolerant one.
[558]One who existed before the universe.
[559]Unblemished one.
[560]Victorious one.
[561]One who has triumphed.
[562]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[563]Origin of riches.
[564]Indra's younger brother.
[565]Dwarf, a reference to the dwarf incarnation.
[566]Tall one.
[567]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[568]One who is lofty in purity.
[569]One who surpasses Indra.
[570]Accumulation.
[571]Creation.
[572]Firm in soul.
[573]Rituals.
[574]Control.
[575]One who should be known.
[576]Physician.
[577]One who is always engaged in yoga.
[578]Slayer of brave ones.
[579]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[580]Honey.
[581]Beyond the senses.
[582]The great maya.
[583]Great in enterprise.
[584]Great in strength.
[585]Great in intelligence.
[586]Great in valour.
[587]Great in power.
[588]Immensely radiant.
[589]One whose form cannot be discerned.
[590]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.

[591]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[592]One who holds up the giant mountain.
[593]Great archer.
[594]One who holds up the earth.
[595]Abode of prosperity or Shri (goddess of wealth and prosperity).
[596]Refuge of the virtuous.
[597]One who cannot be stopped.
[598]Delight of the gods.
[599]One who gives pleasure to the senses.
[600]Lord of those who know about the senses.
[601]One who is enveloped in rays.
[602]Swan.
[603]One with golden feathers.
[604]Supreme serpent.
[605]With a golden navel.
[606]Excellent ascetic.
[607]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[608]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[609]Without death.
[610]One who withstands things from every direction.
[611]Ordainer.
[612]One who brings things together.
[613]One who is not fixed.
[614]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[615]One who is impossible to tolerate.
[616]Chastiser.
[617]One with learning in the soul.
[618]Slayer of the enemies of the gods.
[619]Preceptor of all preceptors.
[620]The abode.
[621]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[622]With truth as his valour.
[623]One whose eye blinks.
[624]One whose eye does not blink.
[625]Garlanded one.
[626]Lord of speech.
[627]One who blocks off those who are distressed, in the sense of saving them.
[628]Foremost one
[629]Ordinary one.
[630]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[631]Law.

[632]Leader.
[633]Wind.
[634]With one thousand heads.
[635]Soul of the universe.
[636]With a thousand eyes.
[637]With a thousand feet.
[638]The revolution.
[639]One who has withdrawn his soul.
[640]One who was withdrawn himself.
[641]The one who grinds down.
[642]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[643]Fire of destruction.
[644]Fire.
[645]Wind.
[646]One who holds up the earth.
[647]One who is extremely gracious.
[648]Cheerful in soul.
[649]One who holds up the universe.
[650]Lord who enjoys the universe.
[651]Powerful one.
[652]One who shows honours.
[653]One who is honoured.
[654]One to whom water is offered.
[655]One whose abode is the water.
[656]Man.
[657]One who cannot be enumerated.
[658]One whose soul cannot be measured.
[659]Superior one.
[660]One who does acts for the virtuous.
[661]Pure one
[662]One who accomplishes the purpose.
[663]One whose resolution is successful.
[664]One who bestows success.
[665]One who is the means for success.
[666]The male cow.
[667]The bull.
[668]One who treads through the universe.
[669]One with strong joints, or one who is strong on auspicious days.
[670]With the stomach of a bull.
[671]Enhancement.
[672]Enhancer.

[673]Solitary one.
[674]Ocean of learning.
[675]With excellent arms.
[676]One who is impossible to bear.
[677]Eloquent one.
[678]The great Indra.
[679]Granter of riches.
[680]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[681]One who doesn’t have only one form.
[682]Giant in form.
[683]One with a shaven head.
[684]The illuminator.
[685]Vigour.
[686]Energy.
[687]Resplendent one.
[688]One who displays himself in the form of radiance.
[689]One who scorches.
[690]Prosperous one
[691]One who is clear in the syllables.
[692]Rays of the moon.
[693]Radiance of the sun.
[694]With the immortal rays.
[695]Deity who brings life.
[696]The sun, the radiant one.
[697]The moon.
[698]Lord of the gods.
[699]Medication.
[700]Universe.
[701]Bridge.
[702]One whose valour is the dharma of truth.
[703]Protector of the past, the present and the future.
[704]Wind.
[705]Purifier. We have written this as Paavana, so that there is no confusion with Pavana.
[706]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[707]One who kills desire.
[708]One who creates desire.
[709]Agreeable one.
[710]One who satisfies desire.
[711]Lord.
[712]Creator of yugas.
[713]One who makes the yugas move.

[714]One who has many different kinds of maya.
[715]Great devourer.
[716]Invisible one.
[717]One whose form is manifest.
[718]One who defeats thousands.
[719]One who defeats an infinite number.
[720]Desired.
[721]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[722]Desired by virtuous ones.
[723]One with a crest.
[724]The human one.
[725]Bull.
[726]Slayer of anger.
[727]Creator of anger.
[728]The doer.
[729]One with the universe as his arms.
[730]One who holds up the earth.
[731]One who is not dislodged.
[732]Famous one.
[733]Since this has been listed earlier, we have not numbered it.
[734]Since this has been listed earlier, we have not numbered it.
[735]Vasava’s younger brother.
[736]Store of waters.
[737]The foundation.
[738]One who is not distracted.
[739]The established one.
[740]The one who holds up Skanda.
[741]One who bears the burden.
[742]One who grants boons.
[743]One whose mount is the wind.
[744]Great in radiance.
[745]The original god.
[746]Without sorrow.
[747]One who saves.
[748]Safety.
[749]Brave one.
[750]Descended from Shura.
[751]Lord of people.
[752]One who is favourably disposed.
[753]One who descended (to earth) one hundred times.
[754]One with a lotus.

[755]One whose eyes are like the petals of a lotus.
[756]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[757]One with eyes like a lotus.
[758]One from whom the lotus was generated.
[759]One who assumes a body.
[760]One who is prosperous with great intelligence.
[761]Ancient soul.
[762]Large-eyed.
[763]With Garuda on his standard.
[764]Without comparison.
[765]Terrible one.
[766]One who knows about time.
[767]Clarified butter.
[768]Tawny one.
[769]One in whom all the signs can be discerned.
[770]One with Lakshmi.
[771]One who is victorious in battles.
[772]Indestructible.
[773]The red one.
[774]The path.
[775]The cause.
[776]With a rope round his stomach, a reference to the young Krishna, who was tied down in ths way.
[777]One who tolerates.
[778]Since this has been listed earlier, we have not numbered it.
[779]Immensely fortunate one.
[780]One with speed.
[781]One who eats a lot.
[782]The origin.
[783]One who agitates.
[784]One who gives rise to prosperity.
[785]The supreme lord.
[786]The agent.
[787]The cause. We have written it this way to avoid confusion with Karana.
[788]Since this has been listed earlier, we have not numbered it.
[789]The special doer.
[790]One who is not easily visible.
[791]One who is hidden.
[792]Occupation.
[793]Place for engaging in occupations.
[794]Framework.
[795]One who provides the framework.

[796]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[797]Supreme prosperity.
[798]Supreme.
[799]One who is evidently satisfied.
[800]One who is nourished.
[801]One with auspicious sight.
[802]One who is loved.
[803]Cessation.
[804]One who has ceased.
[805]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[806]One who should be led.
[807]One who leads.
[808]One who has no leader.
[809]The brave one.
[810]Foremost among brave ones.
[811]Supreme among those who know about dharma.
[812]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[813]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[814]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[815]*Omkara.*
[816]Broad one.
[817]One with a golden womb.
[818]Slayer of enemies.
[819]One who pervades.
[820]Wind.
[821]Beyond the senses.
[822]Season.
[823]Beautiful one.
[824]Time.
[825]Supremely desired one.
[826]Possession.
[827]Fierce one.
[828]Year.
[829]Accomplished one.
[830]Rest.
[831]One with the universe as dakshina.
[832]One who is spread out.
[833]Immobile.
[834]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[835]Proof.
[836]Indestructible seed.

[837]One who is the objective.
[838]One who is not the objective, desires having been satisfied.
[839]Giant sheath.
[840]Great object of enjoyment.
[841]Great wealth.
[842]Without depression.
[843]One who is extremely strong.
[844]The foremost sacrificial stake.
[845]Great sacrifice.
[846]The nave of the nakshatras.
[847]One with the nakshatras.
[848]Capable one.
[849]The emaciated one. We have written it in this way to distinguish it from Kshama.
[850]One who is revered.
[851]Sacrifice.
[852]Donations.
[853]Great donations.
[854]Sacrifice.
[855]Rite.
[856]Destination of the virtuous.
[857]One who sees everything.
[858]One whose soul is free.
[859]Omniscient.
[860]Supreme knowledge.
[861]One with excellent vows.
[862]One with an excellent face.
[863]The subtle one.
[864]One with an excellent sound.
[865]One who grants happiness.
[866]Well-wisher.
[867]Agreeable one.
[868]One who has conquered anger.
[869]One with valour in the arms.
[870]One who shatters.
[871]One who brings slumber.
[872]One who only depends on his own self.
[873]Pervasive one.
[874]One who does not possess only one soul.
[875]One who doesn’t perform only one act.
[876]One who resides.
[877]The affectionate one.

[878]One who has offspring.
[879]Origin of jewels.
[880]Lord of riches.
[881]Protector of dharma.
[882]One who performs acts of dharma.
[883]One who is full of dharma.
[884]One who exists without decay.
[885]Without decay.
[886]One who cannot be known.
[887]One with one thousand rays.
[888]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[889]One who has created all the signs.
[890]One with rays.
[891]Nave.
[892]Established in sattva.
[893]Lion.
[894]Great lord of beings.
[895]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[896]Great god.
[897]Lord of the gods.
[898]The preceptor of the one who holds up the gods.
[899]The superior one, the one who transcends.
[900]Lord of cattle.
[901]Protector.
[902]Lord of the apes.
[903]One who gives large quantities of dakshina.
[904]One who drinks soma.
[905]One who drinks amrita.
[906]One who conquers many.
[907]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[908]Humility, propriety.
[909]Victory.
[910]One who is unwavering in his objective.
[911]Lord of the Satvatas.
[912]Life.
[913]One who is obtained through humility.
[914]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[915]The treasure.
[916]Infinite in valour.
[917]Store of waters.
[918]Infinite in soul.

[919]One who lies down on the great waters.
[920]Destroyer.
[921]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[922]Extremely precious.
[923]One who appears out of his own nature.
[924]One who conquers enemies.
[925]One who causes delight.
[926]Bliss.
[927]One who delights.
[928]Joy.
[929]One whose dharma is truth.
[930]One whose valour was exhibited in three steps, a reference to the dwarf incarnation.
[931]Preceptor of Kapila.
[932]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[933]Lord of the earth.
[934]One with three steps, a reference to the dwarf incarnation.
[935]Supervisor of the gods.
[936]With the giant horn, a reference to the fish incarnation, Manu and the flood.
[937]Creator of the destroyer.
[938]Giant boar.
[939]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[940]With beautiful parts.
[941]With golden armlets.
[942]Secret.
[943]Deep.
[944]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[945]One who secretly wields the *chakra* and the club.
[946]One who can be known through faith.
[947]One with the Vedangas as his self.
[948]One who has not been vanquished.
[949]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[950]Firm.
[951]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[952]Varuna’s son, in the form of Vasishtha or Agastya. We have written this as Vaaruna, to avoid confusion with Varuna.
[953]Tree.
[954]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[955]The great-minded one.
[956]The illustrious one.
[957]Destroyer of Bhaga.
[958]One who delights.

[959]One who wears a garland of wild flowers.
[960]One who wields the plough as a weapon.
[961]The blazing Aditya.
[962]One who tolerates.
[963]The excellent destination.
[964]With the excellent bow.
[965]One with a shattered battleaxe, a reference to Parashurama's duel with Kartikeya.
[966]The terrible one.
[967]Granter of prosperity.
[968]One who touches heaven.
[969]One who sees everything.
[970]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[971]One who has not been born from a womb.
[972]One praised in three Sama hymns.
[973]The chanter of Sama hymns.
[974]Emancipation.
[975]Medication.
[976]Physician.
[977]One who observes the hardships of sannyasa.
[978]Tranquil one.
[979]Devotion.
[980]Tranquility.
[981]One who is devoted.
[982]With auspicious limbs.
[983]Creator.
[984]Lotus.
[985]One who lies down on a lotus (water lily).
[986]One who brings welfare to cattle.
[987]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[988]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[989]One with the eyes of a bull.
[990]One who loves bulls.
[991]One who does not return.
[992]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[993]One who draws everything back.
[994]One who is benign towards those who face hardships.
[995]One who bears the mark of the *shrivatsa* on his chest.
[996]Abode of Shri.
[997]Lord of Shri.
[998]Supreme among prosperous ones.
[999]One who grants prosperity.

[1000]Lord of Shri.
[1001]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1002]Store of riches.
[1003]Creator of prosperity.
[1004]Upholder of prosperity.
[1005]Creator of prosperity.
[1006]Preferred one.
[1007]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1008]Refuge of the three worlds.
[1009]One who is his own eye.
[1010]The horn.
[1011]With a hundred kinds of delight.
[1012]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1013]Radiance.
[1014]Lord of the ganas.
[1015]One who has conquered his soul.
[1016]One whose soul is not subject to anyone else.
[1017]With virtuous deeds.
[1018]One whose doubts have been dispelled.
[1019]One who has transcended.
[1020]One whose eyes are in every direction.
[1021]One without a lord.
[1022]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1023]The steady one.
[1024]One who lies down on the ground.
[1025]Adornment.
[1026]Prosperity.
[1027]Without sorrow.
[1028]Destroyer of grief.
[1029]One with rays.
[1030]One who is worshipped.
[1031]Water pot.
[1032]Pure in soul.
[1033]Purifier.
[1034]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1035]One whose chariot is not repulsed.
[1036]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1037]Slayer of the demon named Kalanemi, a reference to the Ramayana.
[1038]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1039]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1040]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.

[1041]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1042]Soul of the three worlds.
[1043]Lord of the three worlds.
[1044]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1045]Slayer of the demon Keshi.
[1046]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1047]God of desire.
[1048]Protector of desire.
[1049]One who desires.
[1050]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1051]One who is accomplished in the sacred texts.
[1052]One whose form cannot be determined.
[1053]Since this his already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1054]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1055]Infinite.
[1056]One who is in the form of the brahman.
[1057]One who created Brahma.
[1058]One who extends Brahma.
[1059]One who knows about Brahma.
[1060]One who is in the form of Brahma.
[1061]One who knows about the brahman.
[1062]One who is loved by brahmanas.
[1063]One who has a giant tread.
[1064]Great in deeds.
[1065]Great in energy.
[1066]Giant serpent.
[1067]Great sacrifice.
[1068]Great oblations.
[1069]Great sacrifice.
[1070]Great libations.
[1071]One who should be praised.
[1072]One who loves hymns.
[1073]Hymn.
[1074]Praise.
[1075]One who praises.
[1076]One who loves battles.
[1077]Full.
[1078]One who fills.
[1079]Sacred.
[1080]One whose deeds are sacred.
[1081]Without disease.

[1082]With the speed of thought.
[1083]Creator of tirthas.
[1084]Seed of riches.
[1085]Granter of riches.
[1086]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1087]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1088]One whose mind constitutes riches.
[1089]Libations.
[1090]Destination of the virtuous.
[1091]One with virtuous deeds.
[1092]Abode of virtue.
[1093]Wealth of the virtuous.
[1094]Devoted to the virtuous.
[1095]Foremost among the Yadavas.
[1096]One who resides with the virtuous.
[1097]Excellent one who resides along the Yamuna.
[1098]Abode of creatures.
[1099]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1100]One into whom everything merges.
[1101]Fire.
[1102]One who destroys pride.
[1103]One who imparts pride.
[1104]The proud one.
[1105]One who is extremely difficult to bear.
[1106]Unvanquished.
[1107]With the universe as his form.
[1108]With a giant form.
[1109]With a blazing form.
[1110]One without a form.
[1111]One with many forms.
[1112]One who is not manifest.
[1113]With one hundred forms.
[1114]With one hundred faces.
[1115]The single one.
[1116]One who is not single.
[1117]One who sets in motion.
[1118]Who?
[1119]What?
[1120]That.
[1121]Supreme destination.
[1122]Friend of the worlds.

[1123]Protector of the worlds.
[1124]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1125]One who is affectionate towards his devotees.
[1126]With golden complexion.
[1127]With golden limbs.
[1128]One with armlets made out of sandalwood paste.
[1129]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1130]One without an equal.
[1131]Empty.
[1132]One who has taken up a body.
[1133]One who does not move.
[1134]One who moves.
[1135]One without pride.
[1136]One who shows honours.
[1137]One who is revered.
[1138]Lord of the worlds.
[1139]One who holds up the three worlds.
[1140]Excellent in intelligence.
[1141]The origin of intelligence.
[1142]The blessed one.
[1143]One with truth as his intelligence.
[1144]One who holds up the earth.
[1145]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1146]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1147]The resplendent one.
[1148]Supreme among those who wield all kinds of weapons.
[1149]One who accepts.
[1150]One who punishes.
[1151]One who is not anxious.
[1152]One who has more than one horn.
[1153]Gada’s elder brother.
[1154]With four forms.
[1155]With four arms.
[1156]With four divisions.
[1157]With four destinations.
[1158]With four souls.
[1159]With four sentiments.
[1160]With the four Vedas.
[1161]One who knows about the single foundation.
[1162]One who has brought things together.
[1163]One who was withdrawn his soul.

[1164]Extremely difficult to vanquish.
[1165]Extremely difficult to transcend.
[1166]Extremely difficult to obtain.
[1167]Extremely difficult to approach.
[1168]Difficult of access.
[1169]One who resides a great distance away.
[1170]One who slays enemies who are difficult to kill.
[1171]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1172]One whose limbs are the essence of the worlds.
[1173]One with excellent strands (the image of a cloth).
[1174]One who enhances the strands.
[1175]Like Indra in his deeds.
[1176]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1177]One who has accomplished all his deeds.
[1178]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1179]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1180]Beautiful one.
[1181]The bright one.
[1182]With jewels in the navel.
[1183]One with excellent eyes.
[1184]The sun.
[1185]One who knows about the Yajur Veda (the *Vajasaneya Samhita*).
[1186]The horned one.
[1187]The victorious one.
[1188]One who wins everywhere.
[1189]One who is a golden dot.
[1190]One who cannot be agitated.
[1191]Lord of all those who are the lords of speech.
[1192]Giant lake.
[1193]Giant pit.
[1194]Great element.
[1195]Great jewel.
[1196]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1197]*Kundara* is kind of grass. The symbolism isn't obvious. Perhaps the intention is only alliterative.
[1198]Jasmine.
[1199]God of rain.
[1200]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1201]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1202]One who subsists on amrita.
[1203]One whose body is made out of amrita.
[1204]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.

[1205]One whose face is in every direction.
[1206]Easily obtained.
[1207]Excellent in vows.
[1208]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[1209]One who defeats his enemies.
[1210]One who scorches his enemies.
[1211]Banyan tree.
[1212]Fig tree.
[1213]Sacred fig tree.
[1214]Slayer of Chanura (Kamsa’s wrestler), who came from the Andhra region.
[1215]With one thousand rays.
[1216]With seven tongues (a reference to fire).
[1217]With seven parts.
[1218]With seven mounts (horses), a reference to the sun.
[1219]Without a form.
[1220]Since this has already been mentioned, we have not numbered it.
[1221]One who cannot be thought of.
[1222]One who creates fear.
[1223]One who destroys fear.
[1224]Minute.
[1225]Large.
[1226]Lean.
[1227]Stout.
[1228]One who upholds the qualities.
[1229]Without qualities.
[1230]Great.
[1231]One who has not been held up.
[1232]One who holds himself up.
[1233]One who is his own face.
[1234]One who extends the foremost of lineages.
[1235]One who bears the burden.
[1236]Famous one
[1237]Lord of yogis.
[1238]One who grants all the objects of desire.
[1239]Mendicant.
[1240]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1241]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1242]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1243]One who wields a bow.
[1244]The science of war.
[1245]Rod of chastisement.

[1246]One who controls.
[1247]Control.
[1248]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1249]One who tolerates everything.
[1250]The controller.
[1251]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1252]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1253]One with spirit.
[1254]One immersed in sattva.
[1255]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1256]One who is devoted to the dharma of truth.
[1257]Intention.
[1258]One who deserves to be loved.
[1259]One who deserves to be worshipped.
[1260]One who does what is agreeable.
[1261]One who enhances delight.
[1262]With a mighty tread.
[1263]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1264]Great delight.
[1265]Eater of oblations.
[1266]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1267]Sun.
[1268]One who illuminates.
[1269]One with the sun as his eyes.
[1270]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1271]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1272]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1273]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1274]One who does not grant only one thing.
[1275]Foremost one.
[1276]One who is without fear.
[1277]One who is always intolerant.
[1278]The wonderful foundation of the worlds.
[1279]Eternal one.
[1280]Supreme among eternal ones.
[1281]Ape.
[1282]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1283]One who grants what is beneficial.
[1284]One who does what is beneficial.
[1285]The beneficial one.
[1286]One who eats what is beneficial.

[1287]One whose dakshina is beneficial.
[1288]One who is not terrible.
[1289]One who is coiled up.
[1290]One who wields the chakra.
[1291]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1292]One who cannot be conquered through any means of chastisement.
[1293]One who is beyond all sound.
[1294]One who can tolerate all sound.
[1295]Dew.
[1296]One who creates night.
[1297]One who is not cruel.
[1298]The delicate one.
[1299]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1300]The capable one.
[1301]Supreme among those who endure.
[1302]Supreme among learned ones.
[1303]Beyond fear.
[1304]Hearing and speaking about him is sacred.
[1305]One who enables the crossing over.
[1306]Slayer of evildoers.
[1307]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1308]Destroyer of nightmares.
[1309]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1310]Protection.
[1311]Virtuous one.
[1312]Life.
[1313]The one who is stationed.
[1314]Infinite in form.
[1315]Infinite in prosperity.
[1316]One who has conquered anger.
[1317]One who dispels fear.
[1318]With four kinds of flow.
[1319]Deep in soul.
[1320]Without direction.
[1321]One who pervades the directions.
[1322]The directions.
[1323]Without a beginning.
[1324]The earth and the sky.
[1325]The extremely brave one.
[1326]One with beautiful armlets.
[1327]The act of giving birth.

[1328]One who gives birth.
[1329]Birth and other things.
[1330]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1331]Terrible in valour.
[1332]Foundation.
[1333]Abode.
[1334]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1335]One with flowers in his smile.
[1336]One who stays awake.
[1337]One who ascends upwards.
[1338]One who follows the path of the virtuous.
[1339]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1340]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1341]Reward.
[1342]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1343]Abode of life.
[1344]Creator of life.
[1345]Breath of life.
[1346]The truth.
[1347]One who knows the truth.
[1348]One with a single soul.
[1349]One who is beyond birth, death and old age.
[1350]The essence of mantras like *bhur-bhuvah-svah*.
[1351]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1352]Great grandfather.
[1353]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1354]Lord of sacrifices.
[1355]One who sacrifices.
[1356]Limb of the sacrifice.
[1357]Conveyor of a sacrifice.
[1358]Upholder of a sacrifice.
[1359]One who undertakes a sacrifice.
[1360]One who created sacrifices.
[1361]One who accepts the oblations at sacrifices.
[1362]The means of a sacrifice.
[1363]The one who ensures the completion of a sacrifice.
[1364]The secret of a sacrifice.
[1365]Food.
[1366]The granter of food.
[1367]One who creates himself.
[1368]Born from a shout.

[1369]One who chants the Sama hymns.
[1370]Delighter of Devaki.
[1371]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1372]Lord of the earth.
[1373]Destroyer of sin.
[1374]One who holds a conch shell.
[1375]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1376]One who wields the Sharnga bow.
[1377]One who holds a club.
[1378]One who holds part of a chariot (chakra or wheel) in his hand.
[1379]Since this has already been listed, we have not numbered it.
[1380]One who wields all kinds of arms and weapons. Since there is repetition, the actual number of names fall short of 1000.
[1381]Born from wombs, born from eggs, born from sweat and plants and trees.
[1382]Kartavirya Arjuna.
[1383]In the house, there should be only two arms.
[1384]Arjuna.
[1385]The invisible voice.
[1386]The text uses the word *kavi*, a slightly unusual name for Agni.
[1387]Presumably kings.
[1388]There is an abrupt quality to the text and a discontinuity with what has come before.
[1389]This is the answer to the implied question in the earlier line.
[1390]Vayu.
[1391]Soma.
[1392]Alternatively, salty and barren land.
[1393]Heaven and earth.
[1394]Rahu.
[1395]Because they were unclean physicians.
[1396]*Mada* means intoxication, arrogance, lust.
[1397]This word is probably being used in the sense of the deceitful ones.
[1398]Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity and wealth.
[1399]Without forcing someone to walk on foot.
[1400]A reference to Kartavirya Arjuna being killed by Parashurama.
[1401]This can be understood generally. However, there is a specific instance where Indra showered down and Krishna saved the cattle by holding up the Govardhana mountain.
[1402]This is a reference to Vishnu’s dwarf incarnation.
[1403]The single wheel is clearly the year and the seven horses are yoked to the sun’s chariot. The three naves *(trinabhi)* is probably a pun on Vishnu’s name of Trinabha, meaning someone whose navel supports the three worlds.
[1404]The text actually says the one with smoke in his trails, meaning Agni, the fire god.
[1405]All of these leave scope for interpretation. The three can mean three worlds, the past, the present and the future, or sattva, rajas and tamas. It can also mean good deeds, bad deeds and mixed deeds.

The three kinds of motion can be upwards, downwards and diagonal. The four horses can mean time, destiny, divine will and human will.

[1406]More accurately, the three kinds of utterers of speech. This probably means the three classes of priests (excluding those associated with the Atharva Veda) involved in sacrifices.

[1407]As has been mentioned earlier, all of these are small measurements of time.

[1408]The four forms of Vishnu are Vasudeva, Samkarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

[1409]A reference to the five categories of *anna-maya*, *prana-maya*, *mana-maya*, *vijnana-maya* and *ananda-maya*.

[1410]Born from wombs, born from eggs, born from sweat and plants and trees.

[1411]Interpreted as the four kinds of creatures and their acts.

[1412]Krishna's son.

[1413]Either they are like the moon, or they are the ones who rule over the soma juice.

[1414]The word used is tata.

[1415]The one with knotted hair, Shiva's name.

[1416]This is a hymn to Shiva/Rudra from the *Taittariya Samhita*, linked to the Yajur Veda.

[1417]Shiva.

[1418]Shiva's name.

[1419]Pushan's.

[1420]Shiva's name.

[1421]The one with five tufts of hair on the head. There is a sudden break in continuity in the text. As will become clear, Shiva assumed the form of Panchashikha.

[1422]Indra was concerned that the child might threaten his supremacy.

[1423]Durvasa was testing Krishna and the members of his household. Perhaps one should explain that the sage Durvasa is often equated with Shiva, having been born as a part of Shiva.

[1424]The single-eyed one.

[1425]The three-eyed one.

[1426]Rudra means the terrible one.

[1427]The great god.

[1428]Shiva means auspicious.

[1429]Sthanu means immobile, firm, stationary.

[1430]One with many forms.

[1431]This is forced. Smoke is *dhumra*, Dhurjati means someone who has matted hair.

[1432]The lord of creatures.

[1433]The subterranean fire.

[1434]What one has seen is being used for direct perception, what one has heard is being used for the sacred texts.

[1435]The brahman.

[1436]The brahman.

[1437]Conduct, sacrifices, studying.

[1438]Acts and sacrificies that can be seen.

[1439]Yudhishthira's name.

[1440]A reference to the five sacrifices.

[1441]Of studying.

[1442]Tvam means ‘you’ and is used for someone who is an equal or junior. For someone who is superior, *bhavan* should be used instead.

[1443]The image of a seed being sown.

[1444]What should be done and what should not be done.

[1445]Vishakha is being used as a name for Agni, since Agni is the divinity associated with the nakshatra Vishakha.

[1446]Dhumorni is being used in the sense of Yama’s consort.

[1447]Gouri being used as Varuna’s consort.

[1448]The lord of riches is Kubera and Riddhi is his wife.

[1449]Bhouma is being used in the sense of Mars.

[1450]Shani, Saturn.

[1451]Garuda.

[1452]This probably means Kailasa.

[1453]Stated abruptly, this prayer must be chanted after reciting the names.

Section Eighty-Eight

# *Bhishma-Svargarohana Parva*

[1]Bhishma.

[2]Hastinapura.

[3]Satyaki.

[4]Another name for the Kurukshetra region.

[5]Yudhishthira's.

[6]January–February.

[7]Vishnu's name, a reference to his covering the three worlds in three steps in the form of the *vamana* (dwarf) incarnation.

[8]Badarikashrama or Badrinath, in Uttarakhand.

[9]As Arjuna and Krishna respectively.

[10]Bhishma was actually a cursed Vasu.

[11]Markandeya was devoted to his father, Mrikandu. Bhishma had been granted the boon of choosing the time of his death.

[12]Since this is in the singular, it singles out Yudhishthira.

[13]In the eight-fold path of yoga, dharana is the stage of concentration.

[14]If one translates literally, 'the sacrifice of a father' is more accurate than 'funeral ceremony'.

[15]Described in Section 60 (Volume 5).

[16]For the princesses of Kashi, Amba, Ambika and Ambalika. This has been described in Section 60.

[17]Krishna.

Section Eighty-Nine

# *Ashvamedhika Parva*

[1]To Bhishma.

[2]This probably means father and mother, that is, Dhritarashtra and Gandhari.

[3]As a metaphor for futile speech.

[4]Rajasuya is a royal sacrifice. Ashvamedha (alternatively vajimedha) is a horse sacrifice. Sarvamedha is an universal sacrifice, a large sacrifice. Naramedha is a human sacrifice.

[5]Meaning Bharata.

[6]Had the kings been alive, Yudhishthira could have asked them for riches, imposing a tribute on them. But the kings were killed and young princes are now on the respective thrones. Yudhishthira doesn't wish to ask them.

[7]The suggestion seems to be that in times of adversity, one can perform a sacrifice without giving away donations.

[8]King Marutta gave away a lot of dakshina. Unable to carry all of it, the brahmanas left a part in the Himalayas.

[9]Khaninetra seems to have won over the kingdoms of his brothers.

[10]Suvarcha.

[11]Since Suvarcha was generous in giving.

[12]From *kara* (hand) and *pradhma* (blowing violently).

[13]Karandhama.

[14]Indra.

[15]The fire.

[16]Brihaspati.

[17]Samvarta.

[18]Angiras.

[19]Wind is *vata* and this means cerebral disorders.

[20]Shiva.

[21]Bhutas.

[22]Nasatya is a collective term for the two Ashvins. But Nasatya is also a singular name for one of the two Ashvins, the other one being Dasra.

[23]All of these are Shiva's names. The meanings have been given in Section 87 (Volume 9).

[24]The fire god.

[25]Samvarta.

[26]Agni took Brihaspati with him.

[27]Pavaka, Jataveda and Vahni are Agni's names.

[28]This is being offered as an explanation for not striking Vritra initially.

[29]Demons.

[30]Chyavana wanted to ensure a share for the Ashvins. The incident has been described in Section 33 (Volume 2).

[31]This is not to be confused with Duryodhana's father. This is a gandharva named Dhritarashtra.

[32]Dhritarashtra was a king of the gandharvas.

[33]Indra's.

[34]To the kingdom.

[35]The mind and the body.

[36]In *Ayurveda*, diseases arise from imbalances in vata (wind), *pitta* (bile) and *kapha* (phlegm). Kapha is identified with water/cold and pitta with fire/heat.

[37]Mental qualities.

[38]That is, mentally healthy.

[39]Past joy.

[40]Past misery.

[41]Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[42]The Jatasura incident has been described in Section 34 (Volume 3), Chitrasena in Section 39 (Volume 3), Saindhava in Section 42 (Volume 3) and Kichaka in Section 46 (Volume 4).

[43]We have translated *akshara* as syllable. Mrityu means death and consists of the syllables *mrit* and *yu*.

[44]*Shashvata* means eternal, consisting of the syllables *shash*, *va* and *ta*.

[45]*Mama* means mine and has the two syllables *ma* and *ma*. *Namama* is lack of ownership and has the three syllables, *na*, *ma* and *ma*.

[46]Kamagita is something recited by Kama (desire) personified. The text does not have the quotes. We have inserted them in the appropriate place. This is not an easy translation. But the sense is that desire cannot be conquered without detachment.

[47]Krishnaa, Droupadi.

[48]Arjuna.

[49]With its limited riches. Hence, 'only'.

[50]This is being addressed to Vedavyasa.

[51]Hastinapura.

[52]Indra's pleasure garden.

[53]Arjuna is identified with Nara and Krishna with Narayana.

[54]The word used is tata.

[55]This is a reference to the Bhagavadgita.

[56]The second brahmana.

[57]The teacher.

[58]The word used is tata.

[59]Kashyapa.

[60]This is the brahmana who is speaking to Krishna.

[61]The text is gender neutral.

[62]To state the obvious, food has to be appropriate for age and season.

[63]Improper diet leads to imbalance in wind, bile and phlegm and premature death.

[64]Of unnatural death.

[65]Respectively, birth and death.

[66]The jivatman.

[67]In heaven.

[68]Meaning the jivatman.

[69]Virtuous people.

[70]The adoption of a body is determined by the deeds committed in earlier lives. But what determined the adoption of the first body?

[71]*Kshara* is destructible, akshara is indestructible. The body is destructible, but the atman is indestructible. The second part of the shloka is difficult to understand. The three possibly mean the physical body, the jivatman and the paramatman. These exist together and they also exist separately. One can form different couples out of these three.

[72]Death and rebirth respectively.

[73]The brahman.

[74]The shloka is cryptic and some liberties have been taken. The progressive casting away of layers is a reference to the different steps of yoga.

[75]From earlier births.

[76]The elements in the body.

[77]The atman.

[78]There is the metaphor of a yogi waking up after samadhi.

[79]This seems to be an alternative to meditating inside a house. These shlokas are somewhat terse.

[80]There is abruptness in the text. This is now the brahmana who is speaking to Krishna and we realize that this brahmana and the siddha brahmana are identical, though there was nothing to suggest this earlier.

[81]Brahman.

[82]There is a minor inconsistency, because the siddha brahmana is now speaking to Krishna. However, he is also repeating what he told Kashyapa. To avoid confusion, we have put this part within quotes.

[83]A reference to the Bhagavadgita.

[84]In such an event, the gods will not get their shares and humans will also become like gods.

[85]These acts are practised by others.

[86]Like oblations.

[87]There is a yoga-type interpretation of this. The seat of the atman is between the eyebrows. Soma is *ida,* Agni is *pingala* and the seat of the brahman is where ida and pingala meet.

[88]The breath of life is prana and this has five actions—prana (exhalation), apana (downward inhalation), vyana (diffusion through the body), udana (upward inhalation) and samana (digestive breath). Prana is a general expression for the breath of life, as well as a specific term for the act of exhalation.

[89]The seven wombs.

[90]At the time of creation.

[91]The Critical Edition excises some shlokas. The missing shlokas tell us that the ten officiating priests are ears, eyes, tongue, nose, feet, hands, the genital organs and the anus. If ears and eyes are counted in the singular, but feet and hands in the plural, this gives a total of ten.

[92]The garhapatya fire is in the body and the ahavaniya fire is in the mind.

[93]This is cryptic and requires explanation. When one is asleep, the mind doesn’t seem to exist. But the breath of life still continues to be raised. If it is distinct from the mind, why can’t it be used to sense

things? What restrains it?

[94]The brahmana is repeating the jivatman's response.

[95]This is extremely cryptic and requires interpretation. The immobile mind is internal. The mobile mind means the external world, which is subject to perception by the senses. This mobile mind is inferior to the immobile mind.

[96]This is being addressed to the goddess of speech.

[97]This probably means divine and human speech.

[98]Since you are strong, break the rules and experience touch through intelligence and so on.

[99]Resolutions and dreams fail to satisfy the craving. That requires the senses.

[100]This probably means that the breath of life comes before the physical body.

[101]Delight.

[102]This is a reference to the menstrual flow.

[103]Agni.

[104]Uttarayana and dakshinayana.

[105]It is not quite clear what this means. There was a rishi named Vamadeva. However, Vamadeva is also equated with the Rudras, that is, an aspect of Shiva.

[106]Sacrifice with four officiating priests.

[107]The senses consume, not the atman. Learned ones know the difference between the senses and the atman.

[108]The atman is being compared to a fire.

[109]In understanding a preceptor's words, the true preceptor is one's own self.

[110]Meaning, either their own jivatmans or the paramatman.

[111]The brahman is being compared to a great forest and the material world to the terrain.

[112]The seven trees are the five senses, mind and intelligence. The seven fruits are what are experienced by these, the seven guests being the qualities that lead to this experience. These seven guests seek recourse with the seven trees, which are thus also like seven hermitages. The seven kinds of meditation and initiation are meant to progressively extinguish the seven trees. Some of the imagery is not easy to understand.

[113]In the body.

[114]A special kind of officiating priest, *adhvaryu*, associated with the Yajur Veda.

[115]The goat has already been sacrificed.

[116]Jamadagni's son was Parashurama. Guest is an indirect way of saying that Parashurama would accept Kartavirya Arjuna's challenge in a battle. Jamadagni was Richika's son. Jamadagni was killed by Kartavirya Arjuna.

[117]Kshatriyas require brahmanas for the performance of rites. Vrishala means someone who is wicked or inferior, but is often taken to be the same as shudra.

[118]Since the male kshatriyas were killed.

[119]The word used is tata. Parashurama's ancestors spoke.

[120]The five senses, mind and intelligence.

[121]The senses.

[122]By Rahu, during an eclipse.

[123]Smell is an attribute of the earth. Since that has been conquered, the earth has also been conquered and so on for the other senses.

[124]The intelligence of being one with the brahman.

[125]As the brahman.

[126]Arani means the two pieces of wood that are rubbed together to generate a fire through friction.

[127]The brahman. The text is gender neutral.

[128]The way bees determine where there is a flower.

[129]Hearing from the preceptor and sight through inner contemplation. It is easier to contemplate on direct and manifest objects first, ones that can be perceived. Once this has been mastered, one moves on to contemplate the unmanifest, that which is beyond perception.

[130]Kshetrajna is being used in the sense of the jivatman. Kshetrajna was destroyed in the sense of the jivatman merging with the paramatman.

[131]The five elements.

[132]That is, *sannyasa*.

[133]Five senses, five organs of action and the mind.

[134]Following sankhya—five senses, five objects of the senses, five organs of action, five great elements, mind, intelligence (Mahat), ego (Ahamkara) and Prakriti.

[135]The nine gates of the body are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the anus and the genital organ. The three qualities are sattva, rajas and tamas.

[136]Three qualities, five elements, intelligence, ego and the senses being counted as a single entity.

[137]Veins, arteries, nerves.

[138]A liberty has been taken in this translation. Otherwise, the meaning wouldn’t have been clear. Even if one is born as inferior species, if one participates in rites followed by brahmanas, one is capable of uplifting one’s own self.

[139]Because he has transcended the narrow forms of these.

[140]Yoga leads to eight powers or siddhis. Three of these are mentioned here—power to become the lord of everything, power to subjugate everything and power to become weightless.

[141]He remains unattached.

[142]That is, from a cursory examination.

[143]When the sun is invaded by Rahu, causing an eclipse.

[144]The siddhis again.

[145]Ego, egoism.

[146]Organ of sense and organ of action.

[147]Plants, trees and herbs, which germinate upwards from seeds.

[148]This is not clear and the meaning has to be deduced. Brahma’s eternal womb probably means birth as a brahmana and the intention is to convey that among humans, one is born as a brahmana because of austerities and good deeds.

[149]This probably means the four kinds of birth.

[150]The five senses and the mind.

[151]ALL these refer to the physical body.

[152]Flesh and blood.

[153]The jivatman and the paramatman.

[154]Wind, bile and phlegm.

[155]Time.

[156]This means among sacrificial animals.

[157]Respectively, *nyagrodha*, *jambuvriksha*, pippala, shalmali, *shimshapa*, *meshashringa* and *kichakavena*.

[158]The text has this repetition about the sun and the moon. There is some repetition subsequently too.

[159]By others.

[160]He is beyond truth.

[161]The text uses the word *riksha*, which means the same thing as nakshatra. There is no nakshatra named Shravishtha. Instead, there are Shravana and Dhanishtha. Either Shravishtha is to be taken as Shravana, or is shorthand for Shravana and Dhanishtha taken together. In the standard listing of nakshatras, Shravana is twenty-third and Dhanishtha is twenty-fourth. Therefore, the 'first' should be interpreted in some other sense. Alternatively, this is a reflection of precession of the equinoxes.

[162]The savitri mantra. However, here it is being used in a general sense of all mantras.

[163]Om.

[164]That is, sacrificial animals.

[165]This could mean Plakshadvipa out of the seven dvipas. However, Brahmakshetra often means Kurukshetra. This might simply mean that *plaksha* (the fig tree) grew in Kurukshetra.

[166]There is the imagery of a wheel of life.

[167]In the sense of time.

[168]Increases the size of the wheel.

[169]Created.

[170]Sannyasa.

[171]This is a reference to residing in the house of the preceptor and studying there. Having completed the studies, the student graduates and returns to his own house.

[172]A householder's sacrifices meant for gods, ancestors, sages, humans and animals.

[173]All this is meant for brahmanas.

[174]Studying, teaching, performing sacrifices, officiating at sacrifices, receiving gifts and giving gifts.

[175]Thus, officiating at sacrifices, receiving gifts and giving gifts are for purposes of livelihood. That seems to be the sense.

[176]Havishya means food that is fit to be offered as an oblation. This means that it is vegetarian and free from oil and spices, cooked in a single vessel.

[177]As instructed by the preceptor.

[178]Respectively, wood apple and flame of the forest.

[179]As a brahmana.

[180]As opposed to becoming a householder.

[181]Not cultivated.

[182]The initiation into vanaprastha prescribes the diet. The progression refers to first surviving on roots and fruits, then leaves, then water, and finally only air.

[183]Sannyasa.

[184]Not owned by anybody.

[185]He will beg only when the fire for cooking has been put out and the householders have eaten.

[186]The sense seems to be that he should bathe by taking water from rivers, ponds and lakes and not plunge into these.

[187]For death.

[188]Kshema is protecting what one already possesses and yoga is acquiring what one does not possess.

[189]The atman.

[190]The ordinary rites of dharma.

[191]The two birds are the jivatman and the paramatman. In the absence of true knowledge, the jivatman is unconscious.

[192]These numbers relate to the cycle of pranayama. The technical term is *matra* and concerns the duration for which the breath is inhaled, retained or exhaled. When this is for twelve matras, this is an inferior kind of pranayama. An average kind of pranayama has twenty-four matras and a superior type has thirty-two matras.

[193]Bits are left implicit and have to be deduced. The discussion seems to be about Purusha and Prakriti. Prakriti is associated with qualities, including sattva. However, Purusha is independent of qualities and is distinct from Prakriti. In these sections, the word sattva is being used as a synonym for Prakriti.

[194]Non-Critical editions don't have this shloka and its insertion is strange. The dialogue between the preceptor and the student ended many chapters ago. Unless Krishna is being addressed as Arjuna's preceptor, this shloka doesn't belong.

[195]These statements are references to the atman. The subsequent statements are references to the jivatman and the paramatman.

[196]Purusha.

[197]Even if one tries to explain it in one thousand different ways.

[198]One-fourth of the explanations.

[199]Action without intelligence is like travelling without provisions.

[200]The sense seems to be the following. Once one has obtained lofty intelligence and knowledge, one is no longer concerned with more mundane tasks and rites.

[201]The seven primary musical notes.

[202]Like horses.

[203]This means sacrificial animals. The subsequent animals means other animals.

[204]Mama means mine and has two syllables. Namama means not mine and has three syllables.

[205]The five senses, the five organs of action, the five objects of the senses and the mind. Alternatively, the five objects of the senses can be replaced by the five great elements.

[206]Everything seems unreal.

[207]As has been mentioned earlier, it is not clear who this preceptor is.

[208]Bhishma.

[209]Meaning Arjuna's maternal uncle, Vasudeva, Krishna's father.

[210]Hastinapura.

[211]Droupadi.

[212]Anarta was the area of the Yadava kingdom.

[213]Vasudeva was the son of Shura or Shurasena.

[214]In age, Krishna was younger than Yudhishthira.

[215]Krishna met Kunti, his father's sister.

[216]Hastinapura.

[217]Subhadra clearly wanted to visit her father's household.

[218]Arjuna.

[219]This is a reference to Krishna's mission of peace, described in Section 54 (Volume 4).

[220]The word used is tata.

[221]The act of cursing diminishing an ascetic's store of austerities.

[222]Existent/non-existent means objects that exist, but are subject to periodical destruction, when they cease to exist.

[223]There are four types of officiating priests—hotar (one who recites from the Rig Veda), *udgatar* (one who recites from the Sama Veda), adhvaryu (one who recites from the Yajur Veda) and brahman (one who recites from the Atharva Veda).

[224]This is a reference to Krishna revealing his divine and universal form.

[225]Human form.

[226]In the Bhagavadgita, in Section 63 (Volume 5).

[227]The human form.

[228]The word used is *matanga*. This means a hunter, a hunter who dwells in mountainous regions, or a vile man.

[229]Utanka.

[230]Krishna.

[231]To return home after their studies.

[232]To leave.

[233]As dakshina.

[234]Goutama's wife.

[235]King Soudasa was cursed by Vasishtha that he would become a man-eating rakshasa. The story has been recounted in Section 11 (Volume 1).

[236]Sixth hour is not to be interpreted in the sense of 'hour'. This is a division of the day and night into six segments, each of three hours' duration. Hence, sixth hour means evening, the end of the day and the beginning of the night, when rakshasas set out to feed.

[237]Soudasa's wife.

[238]From Soudasa.

[239]Meaning Soudasa.

[240]These words of Soudasa, conveyed to Madayanti through Utanka, are meant to be the sign, since the secret of the curse wouldn't be known to everyone, but would certainly be known to his wife. In addition, since no other escape was possible, one might hope for some good merit to come from the act of giving the earrings to a brahmana.

[241]Following the agreement and after delivering the earrings to Ahalya.

[242]Meaning, blow into my anus.

[243]The fire god. Chitrabhanu is also a name for the fire god.

[244]The serpents.

[245]Respectively padya and arghya.

[246]Raivataka was the name of the mountain in Dvaraka and the festival took place near the mountain.

[247]A kalpavriksha is a tree that grants every object of desire. These are found in heaven. Here, it simply means that the trees were beautifully decorated.

[248]Since the text mentions these two different types of liquor, we have retained the names.

[249]Krishna.

[250]The text says Vasudeva. However, there is a danger of confusing the father, Vasudeva, with the son, Vaasudeva. Therefore, in this section, we have replaced Vaasudeva with Krishna.

[251]The eleven *akshouhinis* of the Kouravas, the Pandavas possessing seven akshouhinis.
[252]This should actually be Dhrishtadyumna, not Shikhandi.
[253]The period during which Bhishma fought.
[254]Kavya means Shukracharya, the preceptor of the demons. Drona was the preceptor of the Kouravas.
[255]Karna.
[256]The five akshouhinis remaining on the Pandava side.
[257]Drupada's treatment at the hands of Drona.
[258]Kritavarma.
[259]Krishna.
[260]Yudhishthira.
[261]Kunti.
[262]Kunti.
[263]Abhimanyu.
[264]Krishna.
[265]Satyaki's father.
[266]Abhimanyu.
[267]Krishna Dvaipayana.
[268]Dhruva's day means Sunday.
[269]The moon.
[270]Another name for Dhoumya.
[271]The camp was in the form of a 3 × 3 square, with nine smaller squares. There were three roads laid out east to west and three roads laid out north to south.
[272]Krisara is made out of wheat flour, rice and sesamum.
[273]To Kubera.
[274]Yudhishthira. *Nidhi* is a treasure that belongs to Kubera and there are nine of these. One of these is *shankha*. Each of these nidhis has a guardian.
[275]We have added the word coins. It is left implicit in the text.
[276]Govyuti is a measure of distance. Literally, it is the distance from which a cow's bellow can be heard. A govyuti is thus roughly equal to four miles.
[277]Pradyumna.
[278]Released by Ashvatthama and invoked on a blade of grass. Parikshit was born dead, but Krishna had promised that he would revive Parikshit. The incident has been described in Section 79 (Volume 8).
[279]On learning that the child had been born dead.
[280]Kunti.
[281]The word used is tata.
[282]Parikshit's eyes are like Abhimanyu's.
[283]Medicinal tree, *Diospyros peregrina*. It is easily inflammable and the fruit yields a resin.
[284]Uttara.
[285]Meaning Abhimanyu.
[286]Uttara is conveying her message to Abhimanyu and also speaking to her son.

[287]Subhadra.
[288]Krishna.
[289]This is impossible to translate. These are officials who ask royalty if they have slept well.
[290]The word *parikshina* means decay or destruction.
[291]They had gone to collect King Marutta's riches for the horse sacrifice.
[292]Kubera's.
[293]Yudhishthira was older than Krishna.
[294]March–April.
[295]Sphya was a wooden sword used to kill the horse after it had returned from its wanderings. Kurcha was a handful of kusha grass.
[296]In Section 35 (Volume 3), Arjuna defeated the nivatakavachas.
[297]In Kurukshetra.
[298]In Kurukshetra.
[299]If the horse is not challenged, one acknowledges the superiority of the king the horse belongs to and becomes a vassal. If this is not acceptable, the horse is seized and a battle ensues.
[300]Suryavarma's younger brother.
[301]Indra's bow, the rainbow.
[302]These warriors took an oath that they would not retreat alive from the field of battle. They were from Trigarta and were killed by Arjuna in the Kurukshetra war, the incident having been described in Section 66 (Volume 5).
[303]So many arrows were shot that they seemed to form a continuous line.
[304]In the Kurukshetra war, Bhagadatta was killed by Arjuna. Bhagadatta was Indra's friend. Thus, he was the friend of Arjuna's father.
[305]This means Bhagadatta and not Vajradatta.
[306]The ocean.
[307]In Kurukshetra.
[308]Jayadratha.
[309]The meteors.
[310]Rainbows.
[311]The word used is tata.
[312]Jayadratha's wife. Suratha was the son of Jayadratha and Duhshala.
[313]The sentence is rather convoluted. 'Father' is being used in a loose sense and Arjuna is the father.
[314]Suratha.
[315]Suratha does not seem to have died fighting Arjuna. He died of fright.
[316]Duryodhana.
[317]At the time of Daksha's sacrifice, Shiva pursued the sacrifice. It assumed the form of a deer and fled through the sky.
[318]In Section 16 (Volume 1), Arjuna married Chitrangada and had a son named Babhruvahana. In that section, the name of the city is given as Manalura.
[319]Arjuna also married Ulupi, the naga princess. This has been described in Section 16 (Volume 1). Chitrangada and Ulupi were co-wives. Babhruvahana is Ulupi's son by extension.
[320]Meaning father.

[321]Babhruvahana.

[322]Babhruvahana's.

[323]In case Ulupi has been driven by jealousy.

[324]Marriage.

[325]Praya, act of giving up one's life by fasting to death.

[326]Chitrangada, Chitravahana's daughter. Chitrangada was the daughter of King Chitravahana.

[327]Otherwise, I should have died.

[328]This probably means Chitrangada, though Ulupi also fits.

[329]A jewel that revives dead people.

[330]Meaning Babhruvahana's capital.

[331]Jarasandha's son was Sahadeva. When Jarasandha was killed, his son, Sahadeva, was crowned in the kingdom of Magadha. Sahadeva fought on the Pandava side in the Kurukshetra war and was killed.

[332]Tree with red flowers.

[333]The horse.

[334]*Shukti* is a pearl. The capital is more commonly known as Shuktimati.

[335]Arjuna.

[336]Krishna's father.

[337]The incident of Arjuna conveying Jayadratha's head some distance away, using an arrow, has been described in Section 69 (Volume 6). Arjuna did not kill Shakuni's son. He severed the helmet.

[338]Shakuni was Duryodhana's maternal uncle. By extension, he was Arjuna's uncle too and Shakuni's son was Arjuna's brother, understood as cousin.

[339]January–February. There is inconsistency in the month, since it changes from Chaitra to Magha.

[340]The sacrifice was an occasion for debating and arguing.

[341]The text doesn't have this within quotes. But these are clearly Arjuna's words, being reported by the messenger.

[342]This seems to be addressed to the messenger.

[343]This is a reference to the dispute in Section 24 (Volume 2), when the arghya offered to Krishna after the rajasuya sacrifice was contested.

[344]Arjuna.

[345]Yudhishthira.

[346]We have used Krishnaa for Droupadi to avoid confusion with Krishna. The sidelong glance signified disapproval.

[347]Indra's horse.

[348]Both Chitrangada and Ulupi.

[349]This is liable to cause confusion. There was a serpent (naga) named Kouravaya and this thus means Ulupi.

[350]Especially Chitrangada and Ulupi, but Droupadi and Subhadra too.

[351]Babhruvahana.

[352]Vedavyasa.

[353]Yudhishthira.

[354]Some rituals are not necessarily laid down in the sacred texts.

[355]Kind of acacia.

[356]Another name for palasha, the flame of the forest.

[357]Kind of pine.

[358]Kind of plum tree.

[359]It is not clear what a chayana was. The word means collection or pile. It was obviously some kind of structure.

[360]Each sacrificed bird and animal was earmarked for a specific god.

[361]Kimpurusha and kinnara are synonymous.

[362]A chaturhotra sacrifice is performed by four priests.

[363]Different kinds of liquor.

[364]Saktu, this is powdered and mixed with water.

[365]There are grains left after a crop has been harvested, or after grain has been milled. If one subsists on these leftovers, that is known as *unchhavritti*. Hence the comparison with a pigeon.

[366]This 'hour' is more in the sense of a division of time. The day was divided into eight intervals (*yama*) of three hours each—3 a.m., 6 a.m., 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m., 6 p.m., 9 p.m. and 12 midnight. This means he ate at six in the evening.

[367]He was picking up grains from the ground.

[368]A prastha is a measure. Sometimes, a prastha is taken to be 1 kilogram. But that is specific and here, something more general is meant. A prastha is made up of four kudavas.

[369]Here, the word used for husband is *pati*, based on the etymology of protection.

[370]Here, the word used for husband is *bhatri*, based on the etymology of sustenance.

[371]The allusion isn't clear. If the guest isn't satisified, the brahmana will probably give up his life.

[372]Putra means son, the etymology is based on the son saving (trayate) the father from hell (a specific hell named *put*). Someone who saves from that hell is called putra. A son thus repays a debt owed to the ancestors.

[373]The five sacred fires are known as dakshina, garhapatya, ahavaniya, *sabhya* and *avasathya*. The three being singled out are dakshina, garhapatya and ahavaniya, associated with any sacrifice.

[374]Gifts must be given to the right person at the right time, and with devotion.

[375]The word used is tata.

[376]To sacrifices.

[377]Ashmakuttas are sages who pound their bodies with stone. *Dantolukhalinas* (or *dantolukhalikas*) are sages who use their teeth as mortar, that is, they only eat grain that has not been ground. Though the text says ashmakuttas, given the context, it probably means dantolukhalinas. Parighrishtikas subsist on ground grain. Vaighasikas live on leftover food. Samprakshalas incessantly perform ablutions.

[378]Agastya.

[379]The use of powers leads to the austerities diminishing.

[380]Anger.

[381]Krodha.

Section Ninety

# *Ashrama-Vasa Parva*

[1]Kunti.

[2]That is, Yudhishthira did not object, freedom having been granted by Dhritarashtra and Vidura.

[3]Dhritarashtra.

[4]The text says *supakara*, meaning someone who made sauces and juices. We have translated this as chef and *aralika* as cook.

[5]Dhritarashtra.

[6]Subhadra.

[7]Subhadra, Ulupi and Chitrangada were married to Arjuna. Dhrishtaketu's sister and Jarasandha's daughter seems to be Karenumati, who was married to Nakula.

[8]Gandhari.

[9]Dhritarashtra.

[10]Dhritarashtra.

[11]Dhritarashtra.

[12]Dhritarashtra.

[13]Bhima.

[14]Arjuna.

[15]Krishna. Krishna wanted the destruction, so that the evil on earth might be eliminated.

[16]In addition to Yudhishthira, Dhritarashtra is addressing Kunti.

[17]Described in Section 81 (Volume 8).

[18]At home.

[19]This is a reference to Dhritarashtra, not Pandu.

[20]There are different ways of interpreting the eight parts of the kingdom—treasury, army, judiciary, ministers, cities, the countryside, fortifications and spies is one possible list.

[21]Against poisoning.

[22]So that enemies can't look down at the spot. The night is avoided for the same reason.

[23]Birds and animals that can imitate humans can repeat the consultations elsewhere.

[24]This seems to be like manslaughter, just short of murder.

[25]*Mandala*, alternatively, groups.

[26]The mandalas are like concentric circles. Radiating outwards in those circles, neighbouring countries that are numbered 1, 3, 5 and 7 are likely to be allies or friends. 2, 4, 6 and 8 are likely to be enemies. In more convoluted language, the four kinds of enemies are enemy, enemy's friend, friend's enemy and friend's friend's enemy. The enemy of an enemy is a friend. The six kinds of assassins (*atatayi*) are poisoners, arsonists, those who attack with deadly weapons, those who steal one's property, those who invade one's fields and those who steal one's wife.

[27]The king, the countryside, cities, ministers, forts, soldiers, treasury, allies, spies, peace, war and neutrality. While there is consensus about the first five or six, there is no consensus about the list of

twelve though.

[28]There are different ways of working out the number seventy-two, all subject to interpretation. For instance, each kingdom has the six components of the king, ministers, the kingdom, forts, soldiers and treasury. The mandalas have been thought of as twelve concentric circles. Twelve multiplied by six gives seventy-two.

[29]Peace, war, marching, halting, seeking refuge and conciliation.

[30]One should give the worst and receive the best.

[31]Presumably, that king is too powerful.

[32]Ganas. The idea is that if the tribes or nobles are hostile or otherwise united, they can cause injury to the king.

[33]Cane bends and yields.

[34]Some citizens naturally wish to help the king. For those who are unwilling, the staff of punishment must be used.

[35]War or peace with someone who is stronger, weaker or equal. Those are the three situations.

[36]Strength and weakness.

[37]For Dvaraka.

[38]To the forest, with Dhritarashtra.

[39]Duryodhana's and his brothers'.

[40]Like fathers and mothers about to be separated from their sons.

[41]Naturally, this is not to be taken literally.

[42]Samvarana was a king from the lunar dynasty, a few generations below Bharata. Kuru was his son.

[43]Yudhishthira.

[44]Shakuni.

[45]Yudhishthira.

[46]Kubera.

[47]Subhadra.

[48]October–November.

[49]Saindhava means Jayadratha. Why is Jayadratha being singled out? Probably because he is related on the daughter's side.

[50]Arjuna.

[51]This is Yudhishthira's quote.

[52]Giving vent to rage.

[53]Yudhishthira.

[54]Gems are mentioned more than once.

[55]Yudhishthira multiplied Dhritarashtra's required amount by ten times.

[56]Dhritarashtra.

[57]Food and drink.

[58]Yuyutsu.

[59]Kripa.

[60]Since Dhritarashtra was blind, from the time of marriage, Gandhari had covered her eyes with a strip of cloth.

[61]Subhadra.

[62]Abhimanyu's son, Parikshit.

[63]Yudhishthira.

[64]This isn't clear. Kunti insisted that she would follow Dhritarashtra and Yudhishthira tried to persuade her against it.

[65]Dhritarashtra was elder to Pandu and was therefore like Pandu's father.

[66]Vidula's instructions to her son have been described in Section 54 (Volume 5). Kunti cited those to persuade Yudhishthira to fight. Kunti's message to Yudhishthira was conveyed through Krishna.

[67]The Pandavas were born in a forest hermitage.

[68]Arjuna's.

[69]Subhadra.

[70]Kunti.

[71]Arjuna.

[72]They were ashamed because their request was unreasonable.

[73]Dhritarashtra.

[74]Kunti.

[75]The Pandavas and their retinue.

[76]A brahmi night is a specific night during which sacred ceremonies are performed throughout the night.

[77]Specifically, the brahmanas.

[78]Dhritarashtra.

[79]Shatayupa instructed Dhritarashtra.

[80]Purukutsa's story is primarily related in the *Vishnu Purana.*

[81]Vedavyasa.

[82]From sleeping on them. Both kusha and kasha are kinds of grass.

[83]This is a bad translation. What it really means is that there were warriors who fought with weapons made out of iron, shaped like the talons of tigers. These were worn on the hands.

[84]The Pandavas.

[85]Dhritarashtra.

[86]Dhritarashtra's.

[87]Parvati.

[88]This is a reference to Subhadra, Krishna's sister.

[89]The king who challenged Krishna was Shishupala. This is one of the rare instances where one is told that Bhima married Shishupala's sister. Even if one ignores Droupadi, this sister was certainly not Bhima's chief wife.

[90]Sahadeva married her.

[91]Nakula. Nakula's wife was Karenumati, Shishupala's daughter.

[92]Uttara and Parikshit.

[93]Signs of married women.

[94]Duryodhana.

[95]Yudhishthira.

[96]Meaning Gandhari.

[97]Both Vidura and Yudhishthira had been born from Dharma.

[98]Literally, something that spreads and is pervasive.

[99]Described in Section 7 (Volume 1). Dharma imposed too heavy a punishment on the sage Mandavya and was cursed.

[100]Vidura was Vedavyasa's son.

[101]Yudhishthira.

Section Ninety-One

# *Putra Darshana Parva*

[1]Vishvavasu, Tumbaru and Chitrasena are actually the names of gandharvas. But here, they are mentioned as sages.

[2]Dhritarashtra.

[3]Subhadra.

[4]Bahlika's son was Bhurishrava. Bhurishrava's son was Somadatta.

[5]The mantra, Durvasa having taught Kunti a mantra.

[6]Kunti wants to know what has happened to Karna.

[7]Asta is the mountain over which the sun sets.

[8]The dead warriors.

[9]While the living looked on, the dead vanished.

[10]The living.

[11]Lomaharshana.

[12]This is a reference to the paths of nivritti and pravritti. Nivritti or detachment brings the best fruits. But pravritti or attachment leads to joy and misery.

[13]This needs explanation. Animals are slaughtered at sacrifices and their bodies are destroyed. However, the gods are pleased and convey the essence of these animals, which is permanent, elsewhere.

[14]While they were alive. Because Dhritarashtra was blind.

[15]Instead of the brahman and the Upanishads separately, this could also be the *Brahmopanishad* of the Yajur Veda.

[16]Parikshit placed a dead snake around the sage Shamika's neck and was cursed by Shamika's son, Shringi, that Parikshit would die from the bite of the snake Takshaka. Janamejaya performed a snake sacrifice for the destruction of the snakes. Takshaka was saved by the intervention of the sage Astika, Jaratkaru's son.

[17]Meaning Parikshit.

[18]This probably means Vedavyasa.

[19]Gandhari and Kunti.

[20]Yudhishthira spoke to Dhritarashtra.

[21]Kunti.

[22]From their mothers.

## Section Ninety-Two

## *Naradagamana Parva*

[1]Near Haridwar.
[2]He roamed around.
[3]As means of death. Had they not been ascetics, death from a fire is inglorious.
[4]Described in Section 19 (Volume 2).
[5]Agni.
[6]The sacrificial fire that had been carelessly cast away.
[7]It was a sacred sacrificial fire sanctified through mantras and wasn’t inauspicious.
[8]Since Yuyutsu was the only surviving son.
[9]Because it was still a time of impurity.
[10]Yudhishthira.
[11]Hastinapura.

## Section Ninety-Three

# *Mousala Parva*

[1]The left is inauspicious.

[2]Balarama.

[3]A brahmana's curse. In a broader sense, this also means destiny.

[4]Sharnga is the name of Vishnu's (Krishna's) bow, made out of horn.

[5]Sarana was the son of Vasudeva (Krishna's father) and Bhadra. Samba was the son of Krishna and Jambavati. The Bhojas were descended from Babhru, so any of the Bhojas could be addressed as Babhru.

[6]Balarama.

[7]The text does not mention Yama. We have introduced it for clarity.

[8]Ugrasena. Ugrasena was Ahuka's son. In the proclamation, Ahuka means Ahuka's son, not Ahuka himself.

[9]Presumably water pots for drinking water, placed along the roads.

[10]The planet of his birth.

[11]Krishna's conch shell.

[12]Keshi was a demon killed by Krishna.

[13]Gandhari had cursed Krishna, described in Section 81 (Volume 8). Krishna didn't want to falsify that curse.

[14]Described in Section 19 (Volume 2).

[15]Krishna's charioteer.

[16]Balarama's had a palm tree and Krishna's had Suparna/Garuda.

[17]Krishna's cousin, the son of Devabhaga, Krishna's father's brother.

[18]From Krishna.

[19]Satyaki.

[20]In Section 78 (Volume 7), Kritavarma helped Ashvatthama in the night, when he killed many warriors from the Pandava side. In Section 69 (Volume 6), Satyaki unfairly killed Bhurishrava.

[21]Towards Kritavarma.

[22]The story of the Syamantaka gem doesn't occur in the Mahabharata. It is mentioned in the *Bhagavat Purana* and in the *Vishnu Purana*. Briefly, Satrajit, Satyabhama's father, got it from the sun god. Kritavarma (and a few others) coveted this jewel. When Krishna and Balarama were away, they killed Satrajit and stole it.

[23]Kritavarma.

[24]Satyaki.

[25]Pradyumna.

[26]The city of the nagas.

[27]These are names of nagas and the first Varuna is a naga, not the lord of the ocean. Dhritarashtra is also a naga, not Duryodhana's father.

[28]Payasam *(payasa)* is rice boiled in milk. Durvasa visited Krishna and Rukmini and was offered some payasam. Satisfied, Durvasa granted Krishna the boon that he would be able to choose the time of his death. He also offered the leftover payasam to Krishna, who smeared it all over his body, except the legs. He did not wish to taint what the sage had given by smearing it on his legs. Thus, except for the legs, every other part of Krishna's body became invulnerable.

[29]*Jara* also means old age and decrepitude.

[30]Indra.

[31]Dvaraka is being compared to a river.

[32]The river that flows in the nether regions, in Yama's world.

[33]Satyabhama.

[34]Vasudeva's name.

[35]Satyaki and Pradyumna.

[36]Shishupala, described in Section 26 (Volume 2).

[37]Balarama and Krishna.

[38]Yudhishthira.

[39]Indraprastha.

[40]Aniruddha's son and Krishna's great-grandson.

[41]Outside the houses, because it was a time for observing the funeral rites.

[42]Vasudeva's chief wives were Devaki (Krishna's mother) and Rohini (Balarama's mother), but he had others too.

[43]Because Vasudeva had performed a horse sacrifice.

[44]This means Arjuna.

[45]With Krishna dead, under dharma, who would have performed Vasudeva's funeral rites? That is what is probably meant.

[46]Krishna.

[47]Cowherds.

[48]Hardikya is Kritavarma.

[49]These sections aren't particularly consistent. Rukmini was from Vidarbha and had nothing to do with Gandhara. Shakraprastha and Indraprastha are the same place.

[50]Krishna's death.

Section Ninety-Four

## *Maha-Prasthanika Parva*

[1]Meaning Arjuna.

[2]Yuyutsu was Dhritarashtra's son through a vaishya woman. The king was Parikshit. Yuyutsu was given the task of supervision.

[3]Parikshit became the king in Hastinapura and Vajra became the king in Indraprastha. Indraprastha is the same as Shakraprastha. Vajra was Aniruddha's son, Pradyumna's grandson and Krishna's great grandson.

[4]In terms of taking Vajra's kingdom away.

[5]This is probably a typo and should read brothers.

[6]The sacrificial fire that burns in a household, the casting away symbolizing the giving up of the householder stage.

[7]Hastinapura.

[8]The word mothers is being used in a broad sense.

[9]By Louhitya or Lohitya, one usually means the Brahmaputra.

[10]Described in Section 19 (Volume 2).

[11]That is Droupadi, Krishnaa.

[12]Madri's.

[13]Diti's offspring are the daityas.

[14]Arjuna.

[15]Vaishampayana hasn't quite spoken about it many times.

[16]Literally, krodhavasha means someone who is prone to anger. Krodavasha was one of Daksha's daughters, married to the sage Kashyapa. Krodhavasha's descendants are sometimes described as deities, sometimes as semi-divine and sometimes as other species.

[17]The dog changed into Dharma, Dharma having assumed the form of a dog.

[18]This incident has been described in Section 44 (Volume 3).

[19]Kunti and Madri.

## Section Ninety-Five

# *Svargarohana Parva*

[1]Karna.

[2]The word used is tata. Given the context, it can be translated as both son and father, though father fits better.

[3]The word used is tata.

[4]To hell.

[5]By lying about Ashvatthama having died. The incident has been described in Section 71 (Volume 6).

[6]Arjuna.

[7]Ganga.

[8]Ganga which flows in heaven.

[9]Droupadi was born from the sacrificial fire.

[10]Shiva.

[11]This is the narration within narration structure. The story was told by Vaishampayana to Janamejaya and was retold by Suta to the sages in Naimisha forest.

[12]Vyasa.

[13]The suggestion is that while Bhishma was on earth, only seven Vasus could be seen.

[14]Balarama’s son.

[15]Krishna’s father.

[16]The moon god.

[17]Understood as dvapara yuga, this makes no sense. However, dvapara also means dice, more specifically, the side of a die marked with two spots. Thus, Shakuni entered dice.

[18]Demons or spirits.

[19]Vidura.

[20]Who was born as Balarama. Ananta-Shesha holds up the earth, instructed by his grandfather, Brahma. Ananta-Shesha was the sage Kashyapa’s son.

[21]Krishna’s.

[22]The story began with Janamejaya’s snake sacrifice.

[23]The snake sacrifice happened in Takshashila, now in Pakistan.

# Acknowledgements

Carving time out from one's regular schedule and work engagements to embark on such a mammoth work of translation has been difficult. It has been a journey of six years, ten volumes and something like 2.25 million words. Sometimes, I wish I had been born in nineteenth-century Bengal, with a benefactor funding me for doing nothing but this. But alas, the days of gentlemen of leisure are long over. The time could not be carved out from professional engagements, barring of course assorted television channels, who must have wondered why I have been so reluctant to head for their studios in the evenings. It was ascribed to health, interpreted as adverse health. It was certainly health, but not in an adverse sense. Reading the Mahabharata is good for one's mental health and is an activity to be recommended, without any statutory warnings. When I embarked on the hazardous journey, a friend, an author interested in Sanskrit and the Mahabharata, sent me an email. She asked me to be careful, since the track record of those who embarked on unabridged translations of the Mahabharata hasn't always been desirable. Thankfully, I survived, to finish telling the tale.

The time was stolen in the evenings and over weekends. The cost was therefore borne by one's immediate family, and to a lesser extent by friends. Socializing was reduced, since every dinner meant one less chapter done. The family has first claim on the debt, though I am sure it also has claim on whatever merits are due. At least my wife, Suparna Banerjee (Debroy) does, and these volumes are therefore dedicated to her. For six long years, she has walked this path of dharma along with me, providing the conducive home cum family environment that made undistracted work possible. I suspect Sirius has no claim on the merits, though he has been remarkably patient at the times when he has been curled up near my feet and I have been translating away. There is some allegory there about a dog keeping company when the Mahabharata is being read and translated.

Most people have thought I was mad, even if they never quite said that. Among those who believed and thought it was worthwhile, beyond immediate family, are M. Veerappa Moily, Pratap Bhanu Mehta and Laveesh Bhandari. And my sons, Nihshanka and Vidroha. The various reviewers of the earlier volumes have also been extremely kind and many readers have communicated kind words through email and Twitter, enquiring about progress.

Penguin also believed. My initial hesitation about being able to deliver was brushed aside by R. Sivapriya, who pushed me after the series had been commissioned by V. Karthika. And then Sumitra Srinivasan became the editor, followed by Paloma Dutta. The enthusiasm of these ladies was so infectious that everything just snowballed and Paloma ensured that the final product of the volumes was much more readable than what I had initially produced.

When I first embarked on what was also a personal voyage of sorts, the end was never in sight and seemed to stretch to infinity. There were moments of self-doubt and frustration. Now that it is all

done, it leaves a vacuum, a hole. That's not simply because you haven't figured out what the new project is. It is also because characters who have been part of your life for several years are dead and gone. I don't mean the ones who died in the course of the actual war, but the others. Most of them faced rather tragic and unenviable ends. Along that personal voyage, the Mahabharata changes you, or so my wife tells me. I am no longer the person I was when I started it, as an individual. That sounds cryptic, deliberately so. Anyone who reads the Mahabharata carefully is bound to change, discount the temporary and place a premium on the permanent.

To all those who have been part of that journey, including the readers, thank you.



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